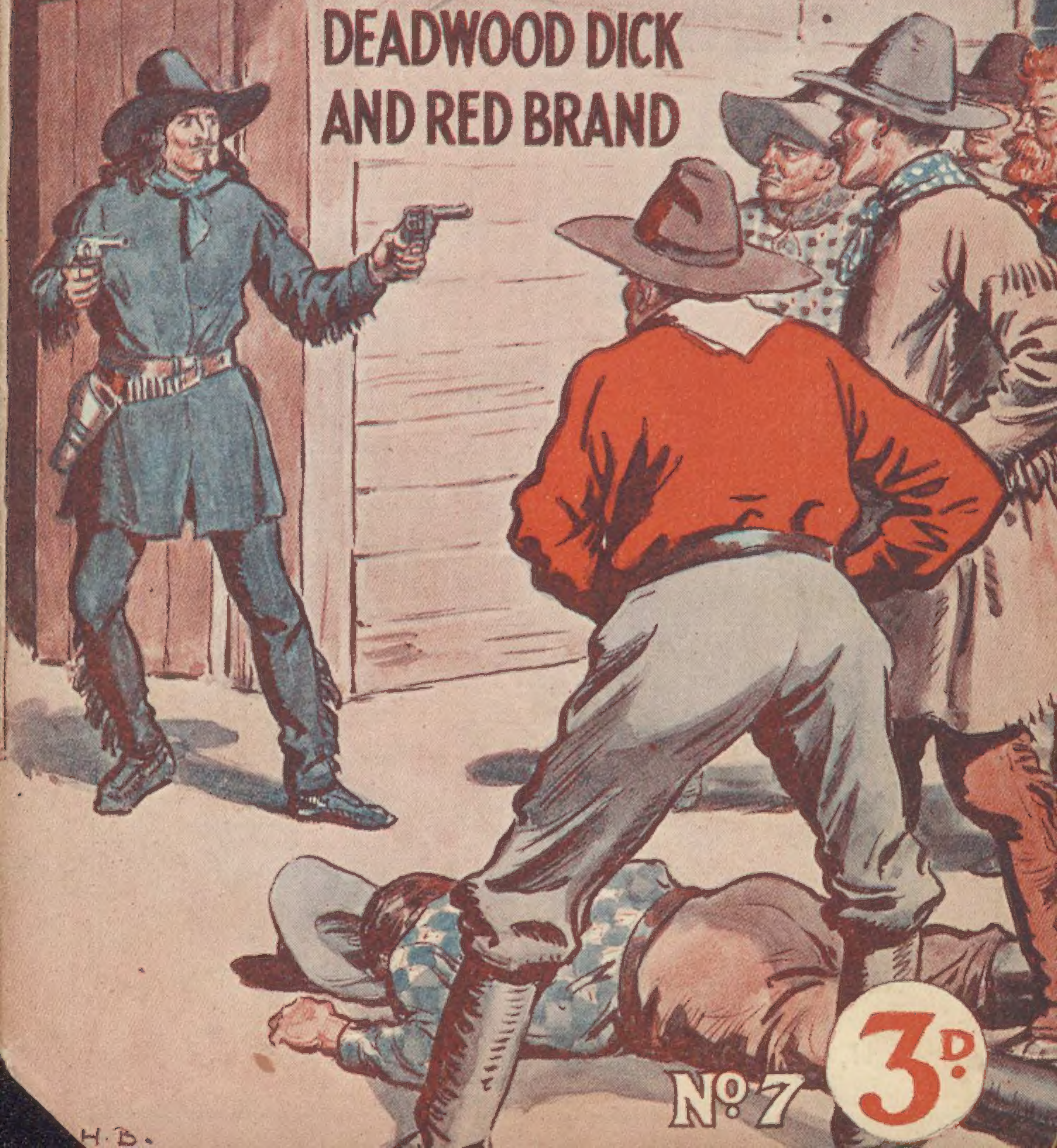


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# DEADWOOD DICK AND RED BRAND

## CHAPTER I

### "BONANZA" SHOOTING

I do not know that you can find it by looking on the map of Idaho; nevertheless it is there—a prosperous little gold and silver-mining town, nestling in the mouth of a gulch of the Salmon river mountains and fronting westward toward as grand a prairie ocean as ever existed. Some one had cried "Eureka!" when the wild tortuous gulch's end was reached; and they had stopped right in its mouth, found abundant mineral resources, and built a city. Not a city of brick or stone, but a city of rude cabins and shanties, which were immediately filled by a population of two or three thousand souls, who rushed in from the other towns to share the excitement of the new-found *Strike*.

Wide-awake, active and prosperous is the condition in which we present Eureka to the reader.

Night has fallen over the city; a few pale stars keep a silent vigil overhead, awaiting the coming of the late moon.

A couple of men, evidently newcomers to Eureka, were sauntering along the main street, smoking cigars, enjoying the invigorating breeze, and watching the restless tide of humanity around them.

Two men, opposite in appearance and age, yet apparently great friends. One a young man, with a fresh, handsome face, bold in expression, and magnetic black eyes and hair—the latter reaching below his shoulders; straight, erect form, which hard service in rough western life had toughened, and a bearing fearless and manly to a fault. His dress was black buckskin with moccasins fancifully beaded, to match, and a broad-brim, slouch hat of the same hue upon his head. Unlike those around him, he wore no belt weapons,

probably trusting to his hands for defence in case of necessity.

His companion was a little dried-up individual, well along in years, wiry of form and well-developed—an uncouth, yet comical little fellow, grim of feature and sharp of glance; a man who might be depended upon in friendship or feared in enmity.

He was clad in regular frontier style, and armed with a small arsenal of belt weapons, in addition to a Spencer rifle slung to his back. At his heels trotted, in sullen defiance of the jeers of a crowd of boys, an ugly, vicious creature of the genus *capra*, who seemed to answer the demand for a dog very creditably.

Many were the glances centred upon the trio as they strolled along, by the observing Eurekaites, and when at last they entered a saloon, over whose entrance was the suggestive title of "The Man-Trap," not a few of the Eurekaites went also.

The interior of the "Man-Trap" proved to be slightly more attractive than the exterior, being furnished after a rude fashion with a bar, chairs and tables, and the walls hung with mirrors and pictures.

It was a whisky-trap and a gaming den combined, and was already filled with excited patrons.

"Come this way, Dicky," said the old man, elbowing his way through the crowd.

They sauntered around, now and then stopping to watch a game, but finally moving toward a rear portion of the saloon, where a shooting gallery was located.

"Hurra! who sez I ain't ther crack shot of Eureka?" bellowed one of the crowd who were gathered around the stand. "Seventeen bull's-eyes out of twenty-five, I'm tellin' you."

"Pshaw, Buckskin; you're no shot!" replied the keeper, a young woman somewhere between seventeen and nineteen



years of age, and one of the prettiest the two strangers had yet seen in Eureka.

"You're a blower; that's your sum total."

"You're a humbug, Noisy Nell," replied Buckskin. "Ye think thar's no one kin shute quite so purty as yerself, an' I allow I can shute clear over you."

"You've just tried, and have a string of shots to pay for, as a result!"

Noisy Nell was very pretty of face and feature, with rose-tinted cheeks, a small shapely mouth of tempting sweetness; flashing, sparkling, brownish-blue eyes, and hair to match.

Buckskin was a brawny customer, with ruffian clearly written in his dark sinister countenance, and gleaming from his blood-shot eyes.

"I hev a string ter pay, hey?" he replied; "wal, jest figure thet down on yer slate thet you've hung thar; an' I'll bet a three-ounce nugget ag'in' a kiss frum yer honey-trap, thet I kin plum the bull's-eye more times out of forty than you can."

"Done!" cried Noisy Nell, instantly. "If you win, you shall have the kiss; if I win, I'll take the nugget. Here, give your stakes to this young man," and she pointed to the younger of the two strangers who had now drawn near.

"Git out!" cried Buckskin, in contempt; "d'ye s'pose I'd trust *that* rooster? Not much! Hold my own nugget."

"Then you won't shoot with me," replied Nell, coolly. "I wouldn't trust you two feet away. Gentlemen, is there any of you who wishes to try a string?"

"Wal, gal, dunno as it would be any harm ter try," said the elder of the strangers, stepping up and examining the target-rifle. "My name is Old Avalanche, miss, an' my old eyes can't crawl along a rifle barrel as they once could. Ef thet target thar war an Injun, I fancy I ked put a current o' electricity thru him wuss'n a streak o' wicked lightnin'. Yes, gal, don't mind tryin' ter fetch thet bell yonder, tho' ther old man ain't so young as he used ter be. This is my pard, Dead—I mean Nedward Harris. He's sum on ther shute. Yes, don't care 'f I do."

And the next moment the rifle was at the old man's shoulder, there was a flash, a report, and an answering ring from the target.

"Thar. That's one fer me," commented the old man. "Load up, gal."

Noisy Nell obeyed with alacrity, and again the old man sighted and shot.

Twenty times in succession he fired, and every time the bell rang.

"Good shootin', sir," said Noisy Nell, as the Annihilator set down the gun.

"Oh! wait 'til ye see my boyee, heer,

shute," was the grim response. "Heer, Nedward, try yer fist."

"Not with the rifle, Alva," replied Ned Harris, shaking his head. "There's no fun in that for me. Give me about four of those six-shooters you carry."

"Heer they are, then, but I'm afeered you're countin' too much. Thet target are deceivin', ef my old optics ain't in fault."

"Oh! that's all right," laughed Harris, coolly. "Perhaps there is some enterprising individual present who wants to bet that I cannot put twenty-four bullets in one mark upon the bull's-eye."

Then the handsome ex-road-prince looked calmly around him, scanning the sea of grim faces.

It was a bold challenge, with a fair chance for winning, and still no one seemed eager to wager money on it.

"Guess there isn't much money in the crowd, or else not much *sand*, Mr. Harris," said Noisy Nell. "A fair chance, gentlemen, and success for you almost certain."

This appeal brought forth a tall, lank, grey-bearded man, with sallow complexion and sunken, wild eyes, and a murmur of "Red Brand!" ran through the crowd, as he pushed his way through.

"Who is it?" Deadwood Dick asked of the fair game-keeper, as he beheld the man's approach.

"No one knows, except that he is called Red Brand, and owns the best claim in the gulch. Is supposed to have heaps of money. His claim is the Big Bonanza," replied Nell.

"Ah! then we will see. Bet, sir, that I cannot do what I offered?"

"Yes, I will bet," replied Red Brand, coolly, stroking his flowing beard. "My Big Bonanza mine against your life, that you cannot put twenty-four successive bullets on the bull's-eye, in one spot. No living man has done it, or can do it, I am sure."

"I can put as many *against* the bull's-eye, on the same spot. No catches?"

"No catches, sir."

"Very well, then. Gentlemen, you all witness this wager, I believe. I am to put twenty-four successive bullets against that bull's-eye, in the same spot, and win the Big Bonanza mine; or, I am to fail, and lose my life."

"Ay! ay!" responded the crowd.

Deadwood Dick turned to Red Brand.

"Your name, sir——"

"Is Red Brand!"

"And mine is Deadwood Dick, the ex-road-agent of the Black Hills, at your service!"

A cry of astonishment rang through the



room, as if the name of the notorious young outlaw were well known in Eureka.

"You Deadwood Dick!" exclaimed Nell, in surprise.

"Yes, one and all, I am Deadwood Dick, but no longer a road-agent. I have come here to Eureka, to lead an honest existence, and be a citizen among you. If you let me alone, I'll let you alone; strike me, I'll strike back, and you probably have heard of the reputation I bear in *that* respect. We can be good friends, or bitter enemies, just whichever you please. Now, then, if you'll watch you'll see me fairly win this mine you call the Big Bonanza."

"It will be yer death ef you do!" growled Cal Buckskin.

"Oh! *will* it? What have you got to say about it?" Dick demanded.

"None of yer bizness! But mind w'at I tole ye."

"Miss, you will please repaint that bull's-eye freshly," said Dick.

Nell quickly obeyed, after which the handsome ex-road-agent took his position, one revolver in each hand, Old Avalanche holding the other two. Then up came the right hand, and, instantaneously, apparently without taking aim, he fired. Then his right dropped, and a shot from his left rang the bell. His right then followed, then his left, and thus in alternation, until the whole of the twenty-four shots had been dispatched upon their unerring mission.

Noisy Nell and Red Brand hurried forward to examine the target. They found only *one visible spot* where a bullet had struck, and that was precisely in the centre of the bull's-eye. *Yet every shot had distinctly rung the bell!*

*Deadwood Dick had won the Bonanza!*

## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST BLOW

Loud cries of astonishment ran through the Man-Trap, as Nell made known the wonderful fact that Deadwood Dick had put each of the twenty-four bullets upon one spot on the bull's-eye. No such shooting as this had the citizens of Eureka ever seen, and the keenest excitement followed.

All had heard of Deadwood Dick, and his reckless deeds of daring, but none of them could have believed that he was such an expert with firearms.

"Hurra!" yelled Old Avalanche, excitedly, while Florence, the goat, bleated his approval. "Dicky, my night-bloomin' serious, ther Big Bonanza is ourn."

"And we shall take it," said Deadwood Dick, coolly. "Eh? Mr. Red Brand; did

I not win it on the square, and isn't it mine?"

"Yes, you won it by the skin of your teeth, and it is yours," was the sullen reply.

"But beware! A curse is on the place, and you may inherit it."

"I fear not for curses, sir. I have been cursed all my life, but have weathered the storm, and can do so again."

Then Dick and Avalanche turned away, and sauntered about, watching the scenes transpiring about them, and observing the many strange faces.

There were girl waiters connected with the Man-Trap institution, some of whom were remarkably pretty, while others were quite the contrary.

Deadwood Dick was not a little surprised when one of these creatures, a gay, fascinating little butterfly, tapped him on the arm, and then pulled him aside.

"You are Deadwood Dick?" she said, more positive in tone than interrogative. "You come from the Black Hills."

"Yes, ma'am!" Dick responded, respectfully. "Is there any way I can serve you?"

"I believe so; and I can serve you also. You had in your band a man named Carlos Cambre?"

"Ha! yes; how did you know that?"

"Oh! I found out. Cambre is my runaway husband!"

"Phew!" this was a discovery for Dick; "your husband, eh? I did not know that he was married."

"He married me in Virginia City, and then deserted me."

"Very likely. He is a rascal at heart, and I have a bullet laid aside to use on him for an injury he did me."

"And it is of him I came to warn you. He is in this very town, searching for you. He may be in disguise and will strike you at first opportunity. So keep your eyes about you. He has some desperate game afoot."

Then she turned away, leaving the ex-road-agent in a state of perplexity.

Later in the evening he went back where Noisy Nell was busy at doing nothing in her business, the customers having adjourned to lubricate.

"I must hunt up this Cambre," he muttered, a scowl upon his face, as he approached the shooting-stand. "He will know of Leone. As a lawyer, disguised of course, I can pump him dry. But I must make inquiries about this Red Brand."

Nell smiled pleasantly as she saw the road-agent come up.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Harris. Have you come back to renew your target practice?" she asked.



"Oh! no, Miss——"

"Brandon, if you please."

"No, I have not returned to give the folk of Eureka any more of my marksmanship. I think they have had a fair illustration that I *can* get there," with an odd little laugh, characteristic of him. "But I wish to question you a little in regard to this chap from whom I won the Bonanza mine. Is he a dangerous sort of an individual?"

"Rather a hard customer, sir. Up at Florence City, last summer, he got some hard names, having been proven guilty of several ugly crimes."

"Ah! then I may be on the lookout for him, and not expect him to give up the mine without a struggle?"

"Right, sir, for every grain of gold you get out of the Bonanza mine, you may expect to fight a battle!"

"Very encouraging prospect, but I'll weather this point, yet. Good-evening to you."

Then the outlaw went back to where he had left Avalanche.

"Come, pard, is it not time to seek repose?" he asked, tapping the old man on the shoulder. "Remember that on the morrow we are to take possession—that is, you are, and your pard Little Alf. I will remain clear of the incumbrance. But it shall be called Deadwood Dick's Bonanza, however, if you like. Come!"

"No, don't git in er perspiration, boyee," the Annihilator replied, grimly. "Thar's no hurry. I'm hangin' around fer fun an' thar's goin' ter be swads-'n'-swads, bymeby, you listen to yer legal adviser."

"Ha! Here comes the Eastern stage, now!" cried Dick, as the crowd surged toward the door at the rumble of approaching wheels. "Come, let's go out and see who comes?"

All Eureka turned out at stage time; consequently the gulch was well lined with humanity, when with the plunging and snorting of the fractious horses, and the cracking of Jehu's whip, the rickety old stage rolled up before the door of the Man-Trap, and came to a halt, 'mid the cheers of the multitude.

Old Avalanche and Deadwood Dick were among the crowd, and watched with idle curiosity the newcomers who left the stage, which was well loaded down.

But when Deadwood Dick's gaze became centred upon one of these—a little, cloaked figure, deeply veiled, and evidently frightened among such a crowd, he uttered a little cry, and clutched the Annihilator's arm excitedly.

"Look, Avalanche! My God, can the dead return to life?" he gasped, pointing to the little figure. "It is she—*Edith*

*Stone*, who you told me was dead—had drowned herself."

He made a step forward as if to follow her, but the Annihilator held him back with a strong grip.

"Hold yer hosses; no sweatin' ag'in. Thet gal ain't no Edith Stone, an' I'll bet my fine-tooth comb an' et's population on it. But in case it is her, *you* do not want to see her, Reckellect, young feller, thet thar's one little red-haired critter thet's deservin' o' yer luv, an' baste me frum North Pole ter South with aged and decrepit eggs, ef ye're a-goin' ter luv enny other gal but *her*! So put thet in yer pipe an' chew it. Jest you ante back inter yonder lubricatin' establishment, and I'll interdooce myself ter ther girl. I'll soon anylize her, *I'm* tellin' you!"

Deadwood Dick turned rather reluctantly back into the saloon, a strange expression upon his face.

He sauntered along, watching those about him, sharply, for now he might look for a disguised enemy in Carlos Cambre. What could the disloyal lieutenant want of him?

"Ha! by Heaven! the blow has fallen at last!" he suddenly exclaimed under his breath, as he beheld a man tacking up a large poster against the wall.

And, in large letters, the poster read, as follows:

**"\$500 Reward!** By that power vested in me by virtue of law, and whereas the Territorial Government of Dakota has repeatedly found guilty of high-handed murder and outlawry the person herein-named, I offer the above reward for the capture and delivery at Yankton, Dakota, of 'Deadwood Dick,' or Edward Harris, the road-agent, whose former operations were confined to the Black Hills, but who is now supposed to be in some of the Territories.

"Affixed hereto, by me, JOHN L. PENNINGTON, on this the 12th day of October 187-, the Great Gubernatorial seal of the Territory of Dakota."

Such was the notice Sheriff Jake McComber posted up for public inspection by the Eurekaites, and it was read and re-read, amid much excitement, by all who were congregated in the saloon.

"Deadwood Dick! Deadwood Dick!" passed from every mouth.

"Deadwood Dick!" shouted the man Buckskin. "Thet very chap was in hyar ter-night, gentlemen—thet very same galoot. He put twenty-four bullets out o' twenty-four on ther bull's-eye, a-flukin'——"

"And Deadwood Dick is here, now!"



cried the young road-agent, advancing fearlessly among the crowd.

"You heard me say to-night, pilgrims, that Deadwood Dick was no longer an outlaw unless forced to be one. Here I am. Leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone. Come and knock off my hat, and I'll knock off yours; *then* it will be war to the last—muzzle to muzzle and knife to knife!"

Not a man moved for a few moments—scarcely a breath was drawn.

Deadwood Dick stood confronting the crowd, his face grim, handsome, expressionless, his form erect, a pair of shining revolvers upon full level in his hands. All knew that he would not hesitate to commence the game of death, if pressed; he was desperate and reckless; as it were, their lives were in his hands. Yet Sheriff McComber did not hesitate to do his duty. He stepped forward, a look of resolution on his sun-browned face.

"I'll not knock your hat off, young man," he replied slowly. "But I must do my duty and arrest you, in the name of the law. You'll see the advisability of yielding without resistance, for they're all with me here," with a nod at the crowd. "Come on, boys! we'll take the braggart, or we'll die a-tryin'. One, two, three, and at him!"

The sheriff was a reckless fellow, whose previous good luck had made him vain, or else he would never have made the move, for the first leap he made forward was a leap of death, a bullet from one of Deadwood Dick's revolvers ploughing a passage through his heart. And that checked what might have been a bloody affray.

The death of the sheriff seemed for the moment to inspire the remaining Eurekaites with a terrible dread, and they shrank back, their hands clinching their weapons, their breath bated, a lack of resolution holding them powerless to move.

And comprehending the situation, Deadwood Dick slowly backed his way out of the saloon, his revolvers still covering the crowd.

But the moment he issued out into the gulch, he saw them spring forward triumphantly, and knew they counted upon an easy victory.

### CHAPTER III

#### AVALANCHE ENCOUNTERS A PHANTOM

DEADWOOD DICK escaped by making a dash through the crowd that still swarmed out in the gulch, and worked his way along by degrees until he was half a mile up the lone gorge, with the mighty walls of moun-

tain rock rising above him. And with his disappearance from Eureka there disappeared a friend on whom Old Avalanche lavished his affection, for on his return from an interview with her whom Dick had declared to be Edith Stone, who was the cause of the parting of Dick and Leone, he found great excitement rife, and then learned of the death of the sheriff, and the young road-agent's daring escape.

"Bully fer ther boyee! I'd do the same ef they kicked me on ther shins. Wonder where he'll go to?"

And this the great Annihilator was left to wonder, during the next four or five days, during which time he made determined search, but could find no trace of Deadwood Dick. After the fourth day of search, the old man came to the conclusion that further effort was useless; then came the remembrance of Dick's right to the Big Bonanza mine.

"I will take persession uv et, an' hold et fer ther boyee," he muttered, and immediately fulfilled his promise by selecting a dozen miners from the crowds of idlers who thronged Eureka, and riding to the mine, which was two miles and a half above the golden town. There was simply a straight tunnel sunk into the mountain side, and an easy place to defend, once possession was obtained.

Red Brand sat in the mouth of the tunnel, smoking away at his pipe, as the horsemen rode up, the Annihilator in the lead.

"Hello!" cried Avalanche. "Heer's our man now, me lads! Hello! Howdy do, Mr. Red Brand?"

"I am well," was the reply, as the miner rose to his feet. "What brings you here, sir?"

"What? Wal, I don't reckon et's hard ter ans'er sech a question es thet," said Old Avalanche, "I am heer, wi' my backers, ter take persession o' ther 'Big Bonanza,' w'at Deadwood Dick won at shutin'. I am called Old Avalanche, ther great Injun Annihilator. I am counsellor and legal adviser o' Dicky, an' I venture to put in his claim fer him, during his absence."

"Your claim shall be recognized," said Red Brand, calmly, though the old scout detected a fiery gleam in his peculiar dark eyes. "Dismount and follow me, and I'll show ye what is to be yours."

"Yes, cum erlong, boyees, but pull yer pistols in readiness, fer we don't know what sort o' deeficulty we're a-goin' ter encounter."

The Annihilator then dismounted, and he and his gang followed Red Brand in through the tunnel, which was long and dark. It finally ended, however, but in a way unexpected to all except Red Brand;



for once more they emerged into the open air and light of day, finding themselves in a deep, natural basin, hemmed in on every side by stupendous piles of mountain-rocks. A basin whose bottom was covered with a light, fine sand, through which ran a stream of clear, sparkling water, pouring down from the crags on one side, and sinking out of sight on the other through a huge crevice in the rocks. And this was Big Bonanza mine.

A strongly-built cabin stood at one side of the basin, surrounded by little rows of spruce pines, and looking desolate and uncanny in its solitude.

"Here we are, pilgrims," Red Brand said, waving his hand around him, with a strange smile. "This is Bonanza basin and the place of the accursed. You see yonder cabin. That is the abode of the spirit of Andrew Denham—the Phantom Miner—who is the terror of this region. There is a little legend connected with this mine, which you should know. It was discovered first by Andrew Denham, four years ago. He is the only one who ever took away an ounce of gold from here, even though these sands are rich with the stuff. He remained here a year, and panned out an immense fortune; then, one day, he was found dead in front of yonder cabin. Since then the mine has had ten different owners, but never has an ounce of gold been taken away at any time. A phantom was said to guard the place, and each gang of miners has been frightened away. *I* bought the mine, and *I* have seen the elephant. You are welcome to the place, if you are willing to fight inferno and all its legions. *I* am not!"

Saying which, the man turned upon his heel, and strode back through the tunnel toward the gulch.

For a few moments after his departure, neither the Annihilator nor his men spoke a word—stood and stared at each other, each evidently waiting for the other to break the silence. At last Old Avalanche made the break.

"Great ham-bone thet wrecked ther constitoochin uv Joner!" he ejaculated, shaking himself by way of preparing for action. "So thes aire an abode uv hog-gobblins, an' ghastly perambulators, eh? A sort o' hot-house fer cultyvatin' speerits; but ef thet cuss calkylated he war goin' ter skeer yer 'umble sarvent, he aire barkin' at ther wrong coon."

"Red Brand didn't lie nary a bit," said Hi Sampson, one of the miners. "Thar is a Phantom Miner, an' I've see'd him ride straight thru 'Reka, like split, an' we all blazin' away at him wi' our revolvers ter no purpuss. Ye might as well try ter tumble an earthquake."

"Oh! I don't doubt your word—ham-bone and Joner, no!" replied Avalanche, "but when ye make this great devastatin' eppydemic believe in hog-gobblins an' sech, jest expect old Gabriel ter play his trump-et card, thet's all."

"And are ye goin' ter stay heer?" asked one.

"Sartain, I aire. Ef ye don't want any o' the a'riferous layin' around loose, here, jest scoot fer Eureka, as fast as you can. *I'm* goin' ter stay!"

"Then we're with you, old man. My name is Keno Bill, and I ain't no coward, ef ther court knows herself. We'll stay, an' we'll hold ther fort!"

And stay they did. Camp was pitched on the bank of the stream, mining implements, provisions and ammunition brought from Eureka; sluice-boxes sunk, and mining begun in earnest at Deadwood Dick's Bonanza.

Another week passed by, and no molestation was offered the miners whose number Avalanche had increased to thirty, and the rich sand of the basin-bottom was panning out immensely.

And so the days passed by—the soft, hazy autumnal days, and at the Bonanza everything ran along in an even tenor. The miners worked industriously, and were well rewarded, for the yellow sands were rich with flakes of gold, in some cases panning out a quarter of an ounce to the panful.

But at last, one night, Avalanche having a considerable bulk of the precious stuff, resolved to go into town for the purpose of exchanging it for greenbacks.

He left the camp well armed, and mounted upon the back of Prudence Cordelia, no thought of danger entering his mind. But when he rode into the tunnel, where all was intensely dark, his thoughts went back to Red Brand and the story of the Phantom Miner, and an inexplicable feeling of dread attacked him.

"G'lang, Prudence, ye durned beast; what is the matter wi' you?" he growled, using his heels in the place of spurs to urge the sorry animal along.

"Drat the luck. I feel 's spookish as a yearling colt in fly-time. G'lang, Prudence — Thunder! hello!"

The latter two exclamations were caused by the sudden bolting and rearing of the mare, accompanied by terrified snorts.

"Be still, you ornery beast! Heavens! ham-bone thet gargled Joner! I see w'at the matter is. Hog-gobblins, as I'm a great disease o' devastation!"

And what the Annihilator discovered did look decidedly suspicious—ghost-like and uncanny, in the dense gloom of the tunnel.



It was a tall, white-robed figure, around which clung a halo of bluish light, moving slowly but surely along toward him, one hand and arm upraised, the forefinger of the hand, the end gleaming like a human eye, pointing accusingly at the old scout. It was such a spectacle as might make even a fearless man like Avalanche quail, and there came rather a whitish expression about his lips, though he sat motionless in the saddle, a cocked revolver in his clutch, and a stern expression on his face.

Nearer came the white-robed figure, apparently floating along on the current of air, that drew through the tunnel. And the nearer it came, the more uneasy grew Prudence. At last it came to a pause, not ten yards away, and now the Annihilator made the discovery that beneath those cloud-like white robes was the *shape of a human skeleton*!

"Hello, thar! What do you want?" cried Avalanche.

There was no answer, except a horrible rattling of the bones, and a declination of the forefinger of several degrees, until it aimed at the Annihilator's belt, to which three leathern pouches of gold were attached.

"Oh! ye want ther a'riferous, do ye? Ye want thes devastatin' disease ter give ye a few flakes o' fortune, do ye? Waal, here they aire then;" and raising his weapon on a level with the spectre's heart, or where such an organ ought to be, he fired—once! twice! thrice! the roar of each report echoing weirdly through the tunnel. But the only result was another rattling of the bones, and that same faint, ghostly laugh—unlike anything the old scout had ever heard.

His hair now fairly rose up on end! What was the meaning of this? Had he indeed tackled something invulnerable—bullet-proof?—a phantom, not of the living but of the dead? An awful horror, such as he had never before experienced, stole over him, and he gazed at the ghostly vision in a sort of fascination, irresistible and intoxicating. The more so, when his gaze was riveted upon a pair of little black eyes, which gleamed from an opening in the phantom dress—a pair of eyes so magnetic that he felt their overpowering influence—felt that he was powerless to move a limb or muscle; it was a strange, awful spell, in which, though living, he seemed as one of the dead.

He was conscious of all—conscious that the terrible thing came closer—conscious that his waist was lightened of its load, even though he could feel no touch betraying the agency of human hands—conscious that the phantom swept past him and vanished,

and that he was left alone there in Stygian darkness, powerless to move or speak.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE GRAYLFORDS

OUTSIDE of the mouth of Eureka gulch, about a mile beyond where the mining element had pitched its town, was a palatial country residence, such as perhaps could be found in no other part of the wild silver land of Idaho. The property embraced several thousand acres of immediate billowy prairie, which was well watered and used for grazing purposes, and the buildings and spacious grounds, which were known as "The Oaks," probably on account of a complete hedge-work of these trees which the hand of man had planted around the mansion.

The mansion was built of stone, which had been quarried from the neighbouring mountains, and was imposing in appearance externally, while the interior was richly furnished.

Here resided the Graylfords, one of the richest and most aristocratic, as well as influential, families in the territory. They counted their money by the tens of thousands, and the senior Graylford owned some of the largest silver lodes in Idaho. He was an inveterate miser, and had few friends among the poor, toward whom he was harsh and haughty. He hoarded his money, and not trusting to the honesty of banks, kept it in a large safe in his mansion.

Of the family there were four, consisting of Fordyce Graylford and his wife, a grown-up son named Guy, and a daughter of eighteen named Claudine.

The elder Graylford was a man of some five-and-fifty years at the time of our story. He derived an immense income both from his mining investments and extensive cattle herds, but this not satisfying his greed for riches, he ventured into speculation in and about Eureka, almost always successfully, in spite of the fact that sharpers constantly laid traps for him.

On the day preceding the night of the Annihilator's encounter with the Phantom Miner, Captain Graylford, as he was called, brought home a new visitor to the Oaks—a distinguished army officer, he explained to his household, who must be treated with the greatest respect and consideration.

The individual in question was a tall, well-formed fellow of twenty-five, with a dark, Spanish face, dark eyes and hair, and a moustache and imperial to match. In dress he was faultless and elegant.

Lieutenant Cambre, he was called, and claimed to be of the United States Army,



which of course was not true, as the reader will readily recognize him as Cambre of Deadwood Dick's once notorious band.

What Cambre's business was at the Oaks was quite apparent by listening to the conversation between him and Graylford, as they were closeted in the speculator's office, an hour or so after dinner.

"You perceive," Cambre was saying, "that the scheme is simply immense. It cannot fail, and the investment of a few hundred thousand will pay twenty-five or thirty per cent. the first year, and after that increase with age. It is a sure thing, and capital invested is bound to pay a handsome revenue."

Old Captain Graylford gazed at the coolly-scheming villain opposite him, with a strange gleam in his little grey eyes.

"See here," he said, bringing his hand heavily down upon his knee, "do you know that I know you to be an unmitigated rascal and a liar? You are smart and crafty above the average, but not sufficiently so to fool an old miser like me. There is no such project in contemplation as the one you name, and, even if I were to invest capital in such a 'spec,' I should do it myself, not trusting even to my own son or daughter, both of whom are a disgrace to the name of Graylford."

Cambre uttered a fierce curse. To be baffled from the beginning was maddening, but he was not to be cheated of his prey, even at this rebuff.

"And you dare to insinuate——" he began.

"I dare to *insinuate* nothing, sir, but to your face I dare tell you openly that you're a scoundrel and a liar! You are no longer a welcome visitor in my house, sir."

"Oh! well, then we'll call me an unwelcome one for the present. I have you completely in my power, Fordyce Graylford, and I mean to make the most of my situation."

"Completely in your power?" repeated the speculator in undisguised amazement.

"I should like to know how?"

"You would! Well, it will require but a few moments to give you an idea of what I am driving at. In the first place, I enter a charge against you which the law, except in Utah, pronounces a misdemeanour. Fordyce Graylford, *you are a bigamist. You have married a second wife, while you have a first wife living!*"

Ha! has a thunderbolt fallen? The mine-owner leaps to his feet, with a ghastly white face, his form trembling as in an ague-fit, his eyes blazing luridly.

"You say this?" he cried, his breath coming and going in quick gasps. "Then you lie!"

"Oh, no! I do not lie," Cambre replied nonchalantly. "I'm always sure of my point before I show my hand, as the saying goes. I can produce that first wife inside of twenty-four hours, and *her* heir to all your wealth, in as many more. Aha! I have got it all worked out fine, old man, and you are in my power!"

"Yes—in your power," muttered the old mine-owner, dropping back into his chair—"heavily in your power. But I defy you. You can do nothing. It is twenty years since all that; time has outlawed the case. She refused to live with me then or to let me have the child. Therefore, I am legally divorced, and the result of that first union is *not* my heir."

"Ah! we'll see about that," Cambre said, rising, with a dark frown. "Perhaps you are right; then, again, perhaps you are wrong. I will seek legal counsel, and report at the first opportunity."

He left the mansion, and ordering his horse, he mounted, and galloped back toward Eureka.

But while galloping along, busying his brain over his little scheme, there suddenly rose before him out of a hollow in the billowy prairie, a figure on horseback—a familiar figure, the sight of whom caused him to leap up in his stirrups, with an oath.

It was Deadwood Dick, as of yore, in his emblematical suit of jet black, black hat, gloves, mask, saddle-trappings, and horse! A revolver was in the young road-agent's hand, else Cambre would have spurred away. But he knew Dick's marksmanship too well to run any risks, and therefore rode straight on until the noses of their horses touched.

"Halt!" came in the clear, pure tones of the outlaw; "you are mine, Carlos Cambre. Right here in my hand I hold a traitor's death—who deserves it more than you?"

The unfaithful lieutenant grew white about the lips, and shifted uneasily in his saddle.

"I am in your power, true enough, captain," he replied, in a low tone. "You will never, never forgive me because I had you imprisoned by your wife's orders, I suppose. Perhaps I did wrong, and I would crave your forgiveness, only I know you are unforgiving. You have your revolver ready—shoot me, if it will cancel the debt; I am not afraid to die!"

"No, you are not afraid to die," replied Deadwood Dick, with a low, mocking laugh, "or else I should kill you, which I am not quite ready to do yet. I would first use you for other purposes."

"Oh! so you wish to make me your tool, eh?" Cambre sneered, his eyes emitting



tigerish sparkles. "Name  $\S$  your work. Dishonour and death have equal terrors—I know not which I shall choose!"

"The case I wish you to execute is this," said Deadwood Dick. "I have learned that Leone, your confederate and my wife, is here in Eureka. I came into possession of the knowledge by merest accident, but did not learn her whereabouts, for a certainty. She may be disguised or not, just as the case happens. Anyhow, she has a babe in her arms—the first child of our union. It does not rightfully belong to her, and she shall not have it! You must steal it, and bring it to me. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly!" replied Cambre.

"And then," continued Deadwood Dick, "I wish you to murder a certain individual named Deadwood Dick, the Road-agent Prince!"

"What! want me to murder you? Are you crazy, man?"

"Ha! ha! No, I do not want you to murder *me*, but Deadwood Dick No. 1. I am Deadwood Dick No. 2!"

"You are lying!" he said, decidedly. "You are the *real* Deadwood Dick, and I know it."

"Oh! you do, eh? Well, in case that what you say is true, who is No. 2 Deadwood Dick?"

"That I cannot tell. Nor can I tell your object in wanting such party killed. It need not matter to me, however. I will get the babe, at earliest opportunity."

"Very well, see that you do."

Then Deadwood Dick wheeled his horse and galloped back toward the mountains, taking a course that would lead him a good dozen miles beyond the mouth of Eureka gulch.

While Cambre rode slowly on toward the mining town, watching the easy graceful equestrianism of the road-agent, and wondering in his mind if it were really Deadwood Dick.

## CHAPTER V

### THE BOSS POKER-PLAYER FROM VIRGINIA CITY

"I AM the boss poker-player from Virginia City!"

This announcement was made to an enthusiastic crowd of miners and roughs, by a youthful individual, who was mounted upon a table in the centre of the Man-Trap saloon, and stood eyeing those around him coolly, a couple of gold-mounted six-shooters in his grasp.

There was nothing remarkable about him, unless it was the cool fearlessness and

courage expressed in his face, which was smoothly shaven and handsome.

"I am the boss pokerist from Virginia City!" he repeated, gazing around him and studying his audience by quick, keen glances. "I am Red-Hot Harris, the brother of that interesting and frolicsome individual they call Deadwood Dick. And by the way, here is a little paper I wish some of you bummers would tack against the wall. Its significance will be readily appreciated by those in the reward business. For the deliverance up to justice of Deadwood Dick, I Red-Hot Harris, the brother of said Dick, and the boss poker-player from Virginia City, will give—but read the paper; I ain't goin' ter tell you."

Saying which, the young man whirled about on his heel, and gave the gaping crowd a few steps in clog, which brought a round of applause.

One of the miners had hung a half-length poster upon the wall of the saloon, and upon it was an accurately engraved likeness of Deadwood Dick, while below were the words:

"\$500 Reward.—This will be paid for deliverance into my custody of the outlaw and road-agent, Deadwood Dick."

"RED-HOT HARRIS."

"At Man-Trap Saloon, Eureka."

All hands gazed, first at the reward notice, than at the lithograph of Deadwood Dick, and then at the smiling, tranquil face of Red-Hot Harris. There was a striking resemblance in the two faces; in fact, the only noticeable difference was that where Deadwood Dick wore a slight moustache and imperial, the face of Red-Hot Harris was shorn of all traces of beard.

The crowd gazed at the two faces and commented upon the resemblance; stared at the cool youth on top of the table, and nodded to each other, knowingly.

"I'll bet the younker's Deadwood Dick hisself!" bawled the ruffian Buckskin.

"You're a *liar*, by the clock!" responded Red-Hot Harris, coolly. "You never saw your 'umble servant in Deadwood or in any other wood. I am Red-Hot Harris, from Virginia City, an' I can lick thet man as sez I ain't—that's *me*!"

"Then I'm yer meat, you young bulldog!" roared Buckskin. "I never take a dare—not even from Satan hisself. Climb down offin that table an' jerk off, ef yer want ter snag yerself ag'in' a ragin' tornader. Come erlong, or I'll—I'll—I'll——"

He did not finish the sentence, for the words froze to his lips. His bloodshot eyes were gazing straight into the black, magnetic ones of Red-Hot Harris, as if glued in one position; his hands hung rigid by his



side; not a muscle moved in his face or body. In astonishment the *habitués* of the Man-Trap looked on, unable to solve the mystery.

As soon as he saw that his victim was powerless to move, act or speak, Harris turned his gaze upon the crowd with a bland smile.

"There he is, gentlemen," he said, with a peculiar laugh, which brought back recollections of Deadwood Dick. "I have whipped him without the use of fists or firearms, and I'll guarantee, if he is left unmolested that he'll be mute and motionless for the next ten hours, unless I should conclude to *dis-spell* him."

At this juncture Carlos Cambre came into the saloon, and seeing the crowd collected, pushed forward.

"Hello! what's the circus here?" he demanded, elbowing his way through, importantly. "Ha! by the devil and all his legions! Dead——"

"Red-Hot Harris!" corrected the young gentleman on the table, coolly—"the twin brother of Deadwood Dick."

Cambre was about to give some retort of denial, but something caused him to desist, and he came forward, with outstretched hand.

"By Jove! so it is! Shake, young man; glad to see you!"

Red-Hot accepted the ex-lieutenant's hand, and shook it, mechanically.

"You are looking well," he said, gazing straight into the other's eyes. "You also used to be a good poker-player. Will you try me a skein? They call me the boss, up in Virginia City."

Harris slid from his perch on top of the table, and Cambre and he sought a less crowded portion of the room, but to no avail. The miners swarmed after them, bound to see what sport there might be. But they were destined to be disappointed. Nothing occurred to arouse their excitements; all of interest was a quiet game of poker, and occasional funny remarks from Red-Hot—he invariably winning.

At last Cambre threw down the cards in disgust and left the table. Harris was about to follow, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder, lightly but firmly.

He turned quickly around, expecting an enemy. But he was happily disappointed. A young woman of pretty face and form stood over him and gave him a sign to follow her, then retreated toward the shooting-gallery. Harris arose and followed her, wondering what was to come next.

Noisy Nell, for it was she whom he had followed, faced him when they were alone.

"You must escape from here!" she said, excitedly, her voice lowered to a whisper.

"But I don't know how. There are no back-modes of exit."

"Humph! I ain't in no hurry to escape!" replied the boss poker-player, staring at her, thoughtfully. "Guess no one's goin' to give me the bounce."

"Ah! you have not seen the danger then, sir? One of your worst enemies is in this room—Roxly the Regulator, from Deadwood!"

"Just so! Roxly, you say? Guess I never heard of him."

"Oh! but you cannot deceive *me*, as you have deceived those men," Nell answered, quickly. "You are Deadwood Dick——"

"S brother!" he finished, with a little laugh. "I am Red-Hot Harris, and no one else, and can't be made different, if one was to try forever."

"But the great resemblance belies you, sir."

"Hang the resemblance. Didn't you never see twin brothers that looked alike? Perhaps I look like the devil himself, but that's no sayin' I am Satan!"

Noisy Nell burst into a fit of laughter.

"Well, you can be Red-Hot Harris, if you like, but don't try to choke me with such nonsense," she said.

At this moment the door of the Man-Trap was thrown open, and a man rushed in, bootless, hatless and in his shirt-sleeves, and in one sentence, he made known his mission.

"Murder! The Oaks has been robbed, and every person but me killed, in cold blood!" he cried, loud enough to be heard all over the apartment. "Murder! murder! thieves! robbers!"

"Now, miss, I'll prove to you I'm not the one you'd make out!" Red-Hot Harris said, hastily. He then pushed forward boldly through the excited crowd, and in two moments the reckless youth stood upon the bar, his fine figure erect and straight as an arrow.

"By the gods! Deadwood Dick!" cried a little, weather-beaten man, starting back in astonishment. "You here?"

"I'm *here*—I am, but nary a Deadwood Dick, old man! I'm Red-Hot Harris, the boss poker-player from Virginia City. I occasionally wear a little badge under my vest collar, which qualifies me to do a little in the detective line. A certain few, here, like yourself, find me like unto Deadwood Dick, the frisky road-agent—my twin brother. I've got five hundred dollars for that chap who will bring D. D. to me."

"Too thin!" grinned Roxly, the Deadwood Regulator chief; "ye're an 'andsome actor, boyee, but ye ken't fool an old stager. Pilgrims, can I rely on ye to take this road-agent?"



"Ay! ay!" chorused a dozen voices; "we're behind ye—lead on!"

And Roxly drew his revolvers, preparatory for the coming affray. But he need not have taken that trouble. Red-Hot apparently was going to offer no opposition to their wishes.

He retained his standing position on top of the bar; his arms were folded across his breast; an expression of cold defiance rested upon his handsome face.

"Harris, come down and deliver yourself up!" commanded Roxly, advancing a few paces.

"I am very comfortable," was the reply of the poker-player, facing the battery of revolver-muzzles that were levelled at him, indifferently.

"Oh! you're still game, are ye? Well, we'll soon fetch you. Pard, I'm goin' ter count one, two, three, an' ef he don't budge at the word *three*, fill his carcass so full o' holes that there won't be any room fer blood ter circulate!"

"Ay! we're *thar*!"

"Correct! *One*!"

"*One*!" repeated Red-Hot, coolly.

"*Two*!" from Roxly.

"*Two*!" counted Red-Hot. "*One* more——"

"Hold!" cried a voice, which rang sternly through the room. "Enough, Roxly! If you want Deadwood Dick, you'll find him conveniently handy in your rear!"

## CHAPTER VI

### CAMBRE SHOWS HIS HAND

CAMBRE left the saloon, after his unsuccessful game of poker with Red-Hot Harris, a dark frown upon his brow.

"Is that fellow Deadwood Dick, or not?" he muttered, making his way along the gulch over which night had thrown its dark mantle. "I'll be hanged if I am not puzzled."

Eureka was blessed with one hotel that was called "first-class," in the mines. It was a large, roomy structure, and bore the name of the "Flag of Truce."

Straight to this hotel, which was perhaps a quarter of a mile from the Man-Trap, went Carlos Cambre, a waiter showing him to a commonly-furnished room on the second floor.

The only occupant of this apartment was a woman of some five-and-forty years—a woman on whom time had left marks, for her features were wrinkled and pinched, and her hair threaded with grey.

Her attire was simple, yet neat, and upon her marriage-finger a solitaire diamond ring was worn that had cost a large sum.

The woman looked up from some sewing at which she was engaged as Cambre entered, nodding mechanically to a chair opposite her.

"You are back, I see," she said, as if the effort to converse was painful. "I suppose you bring the same old story?"

"No, Cathie," the ex-lieutenant replied, "I do not. I to-day called upon Fordyce Graylford, and broke the ice. But I fear that your claim won't pass muster. The old rascal claims that it is outlawed, it being twenty years since you left his bed and board."

"Ah! so he will defy me, eh?" and Cathie compressed her lips, tightly. "Well, we will see about it. He cannot dispute my son's right to the estate, even if I am outlawed. Please touch the bell on the table, there, Mr. Cambre!"

Cambre obeyed, and a moment later an elderly gentleman stepped into the room.

"Ah! did you summon me, madame?" he asked, bowing low. "What service can I do you, pray?"

"I wish to ask you, Mr. Bolton, if I am really outlawed from claim upon the Graylford property—that is, really outlawed by *time*? As a lawyer, your opinion ought to be decisive on that subject."

"Ahem! yes. Well, my dear madame, I am inclined to the belief that your claim is indeed outlawed, on account of the great number of years that have passed since you left the shelter of your husband's roof."

"Oh! then are all my hopes and expectations to be crushed?" the woman moaned, burying her face in her hands and bursting into tears. "I believed, after I found that my truant husband was here, I could make him own me, or I and my boy could come in for the property after death."

"Oh! I wouldn't be discouraged yet, madame. Your son's claim will hold all the property, if you can but find him, unless the old gent has made a late will."

"That son will not be easy to find, I think," said Cambre, drumming upon the table. "Of course I know nothing about who he is, but I have a suspicion, derived from a word Cathie let drop when I first met her in Deadwood."

"Ah! so you have a suspicion, eh?" the woman said, gazing straight at him until he was forced to drop his gaze, a flush of guilt mounting his cheek. "I believe you are playing a double game here, Carlos Cambre."

"Oh! you do, eh?" he replied, a meaning glitter in his eyes. "Well, think what you please. I don't crave your employment one iota. You proposed that I should tender my assistance on account of my knowledge of the country, believing I might



be a handy tool. But a tool usually executes mechanism, and, in *procuring copies of all your papers*, I have provided myself for the hour when my services would be no longer needed."

As he spoke thus, the face of the scheming villain was lit up by a smile of triumph.

"What? What is this you say?" demanded the woman, Cathie, springing to her feet excitedly, while Lawyer Bolton followed her example—"you possess copies of my papers, Carlos Cambre?"

"Exactly, madam! I saw a big game at stake. I saw that I had the matter all in my own hands. I stole your papers and copied them."

"Ah! but we have the originals still!" cried Bolton gleefully.

"Oh, it's all right, my friends," replied Cambre, with a sneering laugh. "I think I can put my fingers on the right party, and make him heir, leaving you out in the cold, unless you will pay handsomely to be interested. I have my papers—the originals, also——"

"You *lie*!" cried Cathie, fiercely.

"Oh! no, I don't; look and be sure of your point before you show your hand."

A look of horror overspread her features, and with faltering footsteps Cathie went to a desk, in one corner of the apartment, and unlocked a small drawer.

"*Gone!*" she gasped, reeling back, as if she had been struck a heavy blow.

"Gone?" echoed Bolton, the lawyer, springing forward to ascertain the truth of madame's statement.

"Gone!" assented Cambre, with a mocking laugh, "and I have got them—put away for safe keeping. My dear madam, and worthy limb of the law, allow me to bid you a pleasant good-night."

And he bowed himself out of the room, with a triumphant smile on his lips, leaving the two astonished victims of his villainy to their bitterest reflections, while he made his way downstairs and out into the gulch street.

It must have been fully an hour after the departure of the terrible Phantom Miner, that Old Avalanche spent in the mine tunnel, unable to move or speak, from the effect of the combined scare, defiance and robbery, before he felt a return of his stunned senses and the blood once more coursed through his veins. From some incomprehensible cause he had stiffened where he sat, but soon was able to move his hands and feet, after which by violent exercise of those limbs he became himself once more.

Prudence occupied the same position she

had before the spell, while Florence Nightingale was browsing away at some brush she had dragged into the tunnel.

"Great ham-bone thet afflicted old Joner," the old man gasped, when he found that his power of speech was returning. "Rushes thet bull-dozed old Moses! am I or am I not am I, as the lads say? An' whar am I?"

He peered around, expecting still to behold his phantom foe, but to his unbounded relief, only blank darkness hovered around.

"The dasted critter's vamoosed, sure's thar's fun in a jack-mule's hind foot. An', by thunderation! my gold's gone! Fact, by gracious! Here I've bin made a helpless old galoot by some infernal power, and teetotally skinned uv my a'riferous!"

The old scout was sorely puzzled for once in his venturesome life.

Turning Prudence about, the Annihilator rode slowly back into Bonanza Basin, and down across the slope to where a camp-fire burned upon the edge of the creek. He was resolved to say nothing concerning his encounter with the Phantom, yet. He would let things work their own way, and keep a vigilant watch in the future, trusting to his own sagacity to unravel the mystery of the Phantom.

Fortunately, he had none of the others' gold but his own with him, and no one need know anything about his loss. Indeed, it would be death to the interests of the mine to alarm the superstitious miners, as they would instantly quit the claim.

He found most of them still lounging about the fire, smoking their pipes and telling yarns, Keno and Little Alf being without rivals when Avalanche was absent. But when he rode into camp on his sorry-looking specimen of a horse, followed by the ugly, sneakish-appearing billy-goat, a shout went up.

"Hurra! here's the great eppydemic o' Injun fizzic!" cried Little Alf, with a hearty laugh.

The Annihilator unbridled Prudence, and let her free, while he sat down upon a log and lit his pipe.

"Avalanche," said Alf, exchanging glances with the others, "we've seen the Phantom Miner!"

"Eh? You see'd the Phantom Miner?"

"Yes, or what we supposed to be his ghostship—a white floating thing in mid-air, sailin' about as ef there was fun in scarin' folks out o' their wits."

"And by heaven! there comes the infernal thing again!" yelled Keno, springing to his feet.

He pointed directly overhead, where, sure enough, a ghastly apparition was slowly and



*gracefully floating through the air, surrounded by a mysterious halo of light!*

Suddenly an exclamation from Avalanche warned the group of their danger. *The apparition, phantom, or whatever, was coming swiftly downward!*

## CHAPTER VII

### A BLOW STRUCK IN FIRE

THE words that rang through the Man-Trap saloon were uttered by a strange horseman who had ridden boldly in through the open door, and with a cocked revolver covered the crowd of miners and ruffianly characters, who pressed forward against the bar upon which Red-Hot Harris stood so defiantly.

The words also caused Old Roxly to lower his aim upon Red-Hot, and wheel partly around, uttering a curse as he beheld the daring rider. Was he wrong? Was this black-clad, masked youth on the horse the genuine Deadwood Dick?

Ah! what doubt could there be of it?

It was the same outfit he had worn in Deadwood, or one a very exact counterpart of it; the same handsome figure and graceful ease in the saddle.

But the two revolvers held in the levelled hands, caused the crowd to shrink back with fear. Roxly stood for a moment in speechless dismay.

"Yes, I am Deadwood Dick!" repeated the same ringing voice—"the so-called road-agent, on whom the world lavishes such a wealth of pure, undefiled affection," with a bitter, sarcastic laugh. "I tried to reform, but you would not let me. Your work be upon your own heads; this time it is fire—the next will be blood!"

Sternly came these words; then, at a single word, the powerful black horse wheeled and bounded from the saloon, bearing away its dare-devil rider into the gloom of the starless night.

"Ten thousand devils! Quick! after him; a thousand dollars for a horse!" yelled Old Roxly, springing after him in pursuit, with the excited *habitués* of the Man-Trap at his heels. "Stop him! A thousand dollars reward for Deadwood Dick! Shoot him! A horse! a horse!"

But Eureka did not possess many available horses and these, at the time, were browsing somewhere within ten miles of where they were wanted. So that Deadwood Dick was free to thunder away up the gulch on his charger, unpursued, while the mighty walls of mountain rock echoed back his wild laugh mockingly. With terrible rage Roxly realized that he was again a subject of defeat.

Among those who escaped from the saloon in the rush, was Red-Hot Harris, the boss poker-player. He slipped away unnoticed and hurried off into the darkness, taking the course toward the Deadwood Dick Bonanza, a puzzled expression upon his handsome, fearless face, and a strange gleam in his black, magnetic eye.

"It is time for me to be elsewhere!" he muttered, striking a match and glancing at his gold watch. "I left the old galoot at eight; it is now nearly ten, and time I was back. That road-agent chap luckily freed me from what promised to be a precarious situation. Thanks be to him! I guess I'll be all right in the future. Ha! a fire, by all that's holy!"

He had now reached the upper end of the town, when chancing to look back, he perceived that several tents and one frame shanty were in flames, near the other end of the town, at the end of Eureka gulch. Loud yells of anger, borne on the evening breeze, proclaimed that the citizens of Eureka had discovered the fires.

"Ha! I remember!" Red-Hot muttered, passing his hand over his brow. "Deadwood Dick said this blow would be fire, and yonder's the blow!"

Men, women and children were rushing about in confusion; every heart was filled with indignation and fear; consternation and anger were the prevailing passions, as the Eurekaites looked helplessly on to behold the conflagration that was destroying their hard-earned homes. A few puny attempts were made to check the flames by the application of buckets of water, but there was a strong breeze astir, and all efforts were fruitless.

Old Roxly, the Deadwood Regulator, was perhaps the coolest man on the spot, despite the fact of his late defeat. He gathered around him a score of armed miners, and spread them around, promiscuously, with the order to shoot the first incendiary seen, without mercy.

This ended the conflagration, and Eureka owed its redemption to the hardened old Regulator, who had sworn to hunt Deadwood Dick to death, or pass in his checks in the attempt.

After leaving the Flag of Truce Hotel, on the termination of his interview with Cathie, Carlos Cambre turned into a street which ran crosswise of the gulch, and hurried along, a low chuckle occasionally breaking from his lips.

"My scheme has worked like a charm, thus far," he muttered, glancing sharply around to see that no one was within hearing. "Cathie is in my power, and I have nothing to fear from her. Deadwood Dick



is undoubtedly her child, by Fordyce Graylford, although he knows it not. The case stands now between him and these later children of the old miser. Whoever will pay the most shall have these papers."

He kept a sharp outlook upon all sides, not knowing when he might receive a blow from some unseen enemy. But his vigilance did not detect a slight, trim figure that constantly shadowed him—had shadowed him, unknown and unseen, ever since his arrival in Eureka.

He went straight to the cottage of John Jones, who drove the Eureka stage, and found that individual very comfortably ensconced upon the doorsill of his habitation, perusing the latest Portland paper.

He bowed familiarly as Cambre approached, and made room upon the sill, but the ex-lieutenant declined the proffered seat with a smile.

"I cannot sit down," he said. "I came to inquire when you fetched in a young woman with a baby, on your stage?"

"Le'me see. A young woman and a baby, eh? Wal, I fetched in two last week, three the week before, and one this week; day before yesterday; so you see it's hard tellin' which you mean."

"I should say so. But the one I have reference to has red hair, and is only of medium stature—very pretty in form and face."

"Dunno nothin' 'bout it."

"Where did you drop all these six women with babies?"

"All at the Man-Trap; but none o' 'em stayed there long, you bet!"

Cambre turned away, without thanks for the information he had obtained. It looked as if there might be some trouble in finding Leone and her child.

The first alarm of the fire had just been given when Cambre reached the main street; men, women and children were hurrying in every direction, confused and excited.

"Oh! what if it should be my home, and Leone and Dickie asleep!" muttered one girlish figure, that flitted by, toward the flames that were leaping skyward. The words were hardly spoken above a whisper, yet Cambre caught them, and his heart gave an exultant bound.

"Here is my clue when least expected!" he muttered, springing off in pursuit of the girl whom he now recognized as Noisy Nell of the Man-Trap shooting gallery.

Noisy Nell soon reached a shanty enclosed by a rough, unpainted picket fence, which stood in close proximity to one of the burning buildings, and Cambre was close to her heels.

A female figure clasping a very young babe

in her arms, stood leaning upon the gate, watching the conflagration, and uttered a little cry of joy when Nell hurried up.

"Oh! is it you, sister? I was just out enjoying the fire. I always did glory in watching a great fire," with a little shivering laugh.

"I feared it was my shanty, and that you would be very much frightened," Nellie Brandon replied, opening the gate and stepping inside the yard, which she had adorned with a few beds of fragrant posies. "I guess you are not much of a coward after all."

"No; my later life has hardened me—both in body and soul. I defy everybody now, and stand upon my guard."

She spoke with bitterness rooted in her tones; it was plain she was losing faith in the world, and its people.

"And yet they say that Deadwood Dick, your husband, is the cause of this fire. There was a young man in the Man-Trap to-night, calling himself Red-Hot Harris, whom I and everybody else took to be Deadwood Dick. Roxly, the Deadwood Regulator, undertook to arrest him; when in rode your husband on his jet black horse, and attired in his costume of black, and ordered him to desist. Then he told them this blow would be fire, and the next blood, after which he made a dash, and escaped."

"And what became of this Red-Hot Harris, sister?"

"He escaped when the crowd rushed from the saloon in search of Dick. He claimed to be your husband's twin brother, is a very counterpart of him, and offers five hundred dollars reward for the deliverance of Deadwood Dick into his hands."

—Leone looked puzzled.

"Was *not* this Red-Hot Harris *my* husband, then?" she asked, eagerly, her flushed face showing how much she was interested.

"Oh! no. I believed so, at first, but not after I saw the man on horseback. It was the same dashing, handsome figure you have so often and eloquently described to me."

A flush of proud joy—genuine enthusiasm—swept over Leone's pale face.

"Perhaps the horseman was my Eddie," she said.

"And do you think he would dare to ride so boldly into the saloon?" Nell asked, wonderingly.

"*Dare?* Why, miss, Deadwood Dick would dare ride into the very gates of the Infernal Regions, if he had any business there!" said a low, insinuating voice, and Carlos Cambre stepped into the presence of the two girls. "Good-evening, Mrs.



Harris! This is rather an unexpected pleasure to meet you here."

"Why, is it really you, Mr. Cambre?" and Leone put out one hand, which he pressed warmly. "I did not know you were here, when I came."

"Did you not? Well, you see I am; and Deadwood Dick and that old scout, the Injun Annihilator, are both here. Presently old friends will meet. Hello! is this the juvenile Deadwood Dick?" and the ex-lieutenant attempted to take the little bundle of humanity in his arms, but the youngster set up such a piteous howl, that the man shrank back.

"Yes, this is my son," Leone said, hushing Master Dick's screams, "and he is all I have left to depend upon. Mr. Cambre, what became of Edith Stone?"

The ex-lieutenant stared.

"Why, did you not hear? She drowned herself in the Little Madrass all for the love of Deadwood Dick."

A pained, regretful expression came upon Leone's face.

"Poor child," she murmured, a tear glistening in either eye. "Mr. Cambre, my dear friend, here, tells me that there were two men in the Man-Trap saloon to-night, who looked like my husband, one calling himself Red-Hot Harris, he being undisguised, while the other was rigged out like the Prince of the Road, and called himself Deadwood Dick. Which was Deadwood Dick?"

"That's a conundrum I will not agree to answer, dear lady. Undoubtedly Deadwood Dick in this case *was* Deadwood Dick. I thought at first that Red-Hot Harris was Deadwood Dick, myself, for the two are near counterparts, but I don't believe he is Deadwood Dick's brother; in fact, I am positive that he is not. As the matter now stands, there appears to be two or three Deadwood Dicks in the field——"

"One of whom takes pleasure in presenting himself for your inspection!" cried a clear, ringing voice. "Carlos Cambre, remember that on the 26th of November you are doomed to die the death of a dog!"

## CHAPTER VIII

### A WARNING

It would be hard to describe the feelings of the miners and Old Avalanche, when the mysterious Phantom Miner was seen descending. They were appalled at the weird spectacle, and stood rooted to the spot, unable to flee or speak, until, by a great effort, the Annihilator mastered his fright, and gave a yell of horror, which aroused

the others, and all fled across the basin pell-mell, toward the tunnel.

At the mouth of this they stopped, and gazed back toward the spot they had just vacated.

The Phantom had descended to the ground, and in his robes of ghostly white and surrounded by that unearthly halo of bluish light, was stalking about camp, examining things in general.

"Great ham-bone thet waz the last sickness of old Joner!" exclaimed Old Avalanche, so overcome with the mystery and terror of the situation that he was forced to sit down upon a convenient rock. "Boys, this is ther fust time ther great Annihilator's ever bin skeered. Aire it the devil?"

"Give it up," replied little Alf Coyle. "'Tain't nothin' human, I'll sw'ar!"

"Boyees, d'ye parseeve w'at thet hog-goblin speerit iz after?" said Old Avalanche. "He's snoopin' eround, seein' ef he ken't find sum more a'riferous, true's thunder!"

"Some more? Then he tuk yours, eh?" demanded Keno, suspiciously.

"Yas, boyees; may's well own up. Met ther 'tarnal thing in ther tunnel, an' it petrified me stiffer'n a poker by jest lookin' at me, an' after skinnin' me o' every grain, swooped off an' left me. When I recovered, I kim back ter camp. 'Tain't no use talkin', pilgrims: et's a genuine speerit. I plugged seven chunks o' lead right at it, out o' my revolver, an' ther consarned thing larfed jest as if et enjoyed thet sort o' fizzic—did, by gracious!"

"Thar goes our a'riferous cuss-durn, the sperrit!" growled Coyle, as the Phantom was seen to approach a large box, in which the miners kept their gold, and lift the lid. "Oh, great Jerusalem! jest wait till I sight him," and the young miner threw his long-barrelled rifle to his shoulder.

But Old Avalanche interfered.

"Don't dispense your fizzic yet, boyee," he said. "One bullet wouldn't effect thet hog-goblin no more'n would a flea-bite. We must creep down ter ther camp, and make a rush upon et, or our gold is gone whar ther woodbine twineth."

Ready to obey one whom they knew to be fearless, the miners threw themselves upon their hands and knees and crept toward the camp, resolved to make one more attempt to extirpate the Phantom.

It was still there, evidently sampling the contents of the strong-box, which the miners had negligently left unlocked. The halo of bluish light still surrounded the ghostly figure like a shroud; everything about the object seemed unearthly.

Closer and closer crept the miners, Old



Avalanche at their head! Now they were only a dozen yards from the mysterious Phantom, when slowly the apparition soars upward into the darkness—is gone! while the astounded miners creep on to their camp-fire, speechless and horrified at what they had seen.

The strong-box they found to be rifled of every grain of gold, as they had expected. The Phantom was a thief as well as a spirit, then.

"Boyees!" the Annihilator said, wiping his dampened forehead. "I've been thru more infarnelated scrapes an' adventur's than most feller humans o' my age, but I'll be hanged ef I ever hed enny genooine hog-gobblins ter wras'le wi' before. I hed sum doubts, awhile ago, thet this war no speerit, but I'm satisfied now. Et aire the pure quill!"

"Exactly!" added Keno, decisively. "It are a genuine floatin' evaporated soul, right fresh out o' the regions of Tinctoarius!"

"Which settles it thet Little Alf Coyle ain't a-goin' ter stay in Deadwood Dick's Bonanza any longer," announced that individual, venturing to light his pipe, now that the Phantom had gone. "I propose we evacuate."

"Nixy!" Thes great devastatin' Injun eppyzootic o' ther peraries aire goin' ter stay an' fight it out on this line if it takes all winter. An' I'll paste thet galoot beauchiful thet dares go an' desert!" cried the old leader.

The miners exchanged glances. They knew the veteran would not hesitate to back his words.

"I'm with ther Annihilator," said Keno, promptly. "I can make my five dollars a day here, an' thar ain't no ghosts goin' ter scare me away."

"I've just bin studyin' on an ijee," said the Annihilator, slowly. "Why not go an' set fire to yonder old cabin? Red Brand sed thar's whar ther Phantom Miner held his quarters."

"Yes, an' look! thar's ther cuss-darned thing now!" cried Alf, pointing toward the cabin. With dilated eyes, the miners saw the Phantom slowly descend out of mid-air and enter the old vine-wreathed habitation.

"Now's our time, lads!" whispered Avalanche excitedly. "Ther bird's caged, an' we'll cremate it. Snatch a torch an' kim along. Ther old shell's dry, an' 'll burn like old been-zeen!"

He plucked a burning brand from the fire, and his companions did likewise; then in a body they rushed toward the old cabin, looking wild and weird under the flaring torchlight.

The work of setting the fire in half a

dozen places was but of a moment; then the miners drew back at a safe distance, and watched the flames run madly through the crisp dry vines that covered the cabin walls. They crackled, and leaped high toward the heavens, luridly illumining the black night.

Eagerly the miners watched the spectacle, believing that they had successfully triumphed over the Phantom—had caged it in this fiery trap.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Little Alf, gleefully, "it's good-bye, Phantom Miner, now. Hark! don't ye hear him frying in yonder furnace?"

"He's a gone goose, I reckon," replied Keno, "onless yc ken't scorch speerits. I never hed enny 'sperience in thet line, myself."

"Scorch! nothin'!" suddenly cried Avalanche. "Look!" and he pointed toward the burning cabin.

The vines had nearly burned away, and the flames were beginning to creep over the dry logs, when all at once that mysterious apparition of the Phantom appeared upon the roof, which was surrounded by leaping flames. A wild, awful shriek; then the thing began swiftly to arise, and floated like a cloud off up into the blackness of the overcast heavens, until lost from view.

The startling words of threat caused Carlos Cambre to wheel about, his hand seeking a revolver in his belt. But he paused and hesitated, when his eyes rested on the black knight of road-agents—the familiar, sombre-clad figure of Deadwood Dick.

"You?" he gasped, allowing his hand to drop to his side.

"Yes, I!" replied the young outlaw. "I saw you here, and came to see if you have forgotten your mission."

"N-no! of course not," the ex-lieutenant faltered, quailing beneath the other's stern gaze. "But, you must give me time."

"Until the 26th—your death-day!" was the cool, stern answer.

"Dick! oh! Dick! Is this really you?"

Leone had put her babe into the arms of Noisy Nell, and sprung eagerly forward—stood before the man in black, hopeful, and oh! so fearful he would repulse her advance.

He looked down at her a moment; then put his arm gently around her, drawing her close to him.

"Leone, again we meet—unexpectedly, for I supposed you far from here. But, we must part. My oath must remain unbroken. Is that the—our boy?"

"Yes, that is our Dick," Leone said, reaching for the babe that he might more closely inspect it.

"See, Dickie, this is your papa! Oh!



Eddie, he is all I have left, now, since you deserted me. Oh! my husband," and her voice was lowered to a whisper, "will you never come back?"

"Some time, peerless!" was the low reply, then he turned and strode away into the darkness.

Cambre soon followed. He saw no way of stealing the child at present, and besides, he had work to attend to elsewhere.

After he had gone, Leone and Noisy Nell stood in their front yard and watched the progress of the flames for some time. But at last they grew tired of the glare, and retired into the shanty, which was Nellie Brandon's home. There were but a couple of rough rooms, but these were neatly furnished and cheerful.

Leone seated herself before a low fire which burned upon the hearth, clasping infant Dick close to her breast.

She was crying softly to herself, when Noisy Nell came and seated herself by the fire.

"What! crying again, Mrs. Harris? Please don't; you will cry your pretty eyes out, some of these days."

"Oh! I cannot help it, Nellie. You don't know anything about it, for you were never the mother of a loved husband's child, and that husband estranged from you. Oh! it seems, sometimes, as if I could not live this life much longer, without him."

At this instant there came a timorous knock at the door: then the sound of retreating footsteps.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Nellie, picking up a paper that had been thrust under the door. "Ha! mercy! Listen, Leone; it is a warning to you:

"Fly, without delay. If you have male friends, seek them. Above all, beware of Carlos Cambre. He is scheming to steal your child, to deliver into the hands of a man—Deadwood Dick No. 2. Never leave the babe unprotected. Will report further, anon.  
DETECTIVE."

## CHAPTER IX

### FLEEING FROM FOES

On the morning succeeding the fire, when the excitement of the night was somewhat subdued, the Eurekaites gave their attention to the matter of the murder and robbery at the Oaks.

Cornell, the man servant who had brought the report, accompanied by Murrill, a newly appointed sheriff, and Roxly, the Regulator, with a posse of armed men, set out for the scene of the massacre, as soon as day dawned

to investigate matters, for, although Fordyce Graylford was a miser and not a general favourite, his influence was not to be despised.

On their arrival at the mansion, the servant's statement was found to be correct, all except that Fordyce Graylford was not dead, but seriously wounded. His wife, son, and daughter and five servants lay dead where they had been shot down.

The old speculator was wounded in a dozen places, and faint and exhausted from a great loss of blood, but had managed to drag himself about from place to place, leaving a gory trail wherever he had gone.

He seemed relieved when he saw that friends had come.

"Do you suspect the author of this fearful tragedy, Captain Graylford?" asked Murrill, the new sheriff.

"No! God only knows who can have struck me such a blow. But that he is numbered with the dead, there is one I could suspect, for he has several times of late threatened my life."

"Ah! perhaps we've already struck a clue. To whom do you refer?"

"To my son, who lies dead, yonder. But I cannot suspect *him*, now."

"Ah! he may be the traitor; there is no telling. Men, remove these bodies and see that they are prepared for burial. Roxly, you are a good surgeon; dress the captain's wounds."

And after giving these orders the sheriff went over to the stark, stiff body of young Graylford, and went through the pockets of his clothing.

From among other things taken from the young man's pockets, he soon selected a small note, penned in a bold, graceful hand. It had been written on the day before, and ran as follows:

"The men will come. It is best I should not accompany them. Look out for yourself about nine in the evening."

"CAMBRE."

"Ha! ha! Cambre," muttered Murrill, scratching his head. "As long as I have been in Eureka I never before heard that name. Either it is an assumed one, or else this Cambre is a new arrival."

He put the paper in his pocket, and helped remove the bodies. The old speculator was fixed up as best as could be under the circumstances, and left in care of a couple of competent nurses.

Sheriff Murrill went back to Eureka, and made careful inquiries after a man named Cambre, but amid the seething populace of the infant Deadwood, no one knew aught concerning the individual in question.

But Murrill was not baffled. He was



possessed of great patience, and one failure by no means discouraged him. He resolved to watch and wait, trusting to luck and his own keen powers of perception to sift the matter to the bottom.

Later in the day he shouldered his rifle, and set off up the gulch, having in mind to shoot a deer if one came within range. But a couple of hours' wanderings among the mountain crags put him all out of the notion of game, and seating himself upon a natural rocky platform, he drew the little piece of paper from his pocket, and scanned the few lines, eagerly.

"Cambre! Cambre! I am sure I never heard the name. I wish I could find some one who knows this Cambre."

"Wishes are often unexpectedly realized!" said a cool voice, close at hand, and Murrill glanced quickly around to behold a person seated astride a boulder directly in his rear, where he had evidently been for some moments a listener to the sheriff's muttered soliloquy. "I happen to know this same individual you are in quest of."

"Eh! you do?" exclaimed Murrill, staring curiously at the handsome black-clad figure, whose face was masked and shaded by a broad sombrero. "Who are you, pray?"

"It hardly matters. I am one whom the world drives before it—an outcast, a wanderer, and an ex-road-agent chief."

"You are Deadwood Dick!" Murrill exclaimed.

"Yes, Deadwood Dick, if you like it that way," was the indifferent reply. "The man that strikes back when struck at. Don't fear; I shall not offer you harm as long as you mind your own business. You know how the other sheriff departed. It was all because of rash hot-headedness."

"You say so because you recognize no law, young man."

"No more I don't. But didn't I offer to make amends, and become an honest, loyal citizen, if the people of Eureka would accept of me? Yes, you know I did, and they chose my hate rather than my friendship. They shall have all they want of it. Which do you prefer, sir?"

Murrill reflected. He had no grudge against this youth. Why should he enlist against him, when apparently his friendship would not be despised?

"I prefer your friendship. I have nothing against you, and if it is agreeable, we can be friends in earnest."

"It is agreeable, decidedly," Deadwood Dick said, sliding down from his perch, and extending his black-gloved hand. "I have so few true friends in the world, that I am anxious to add to the list. I think you are one whom I can trust."

"Implicitly. My friendship is lasting. And, now, about this Cambre! You know him, eh?"

"Ought to. He was a lieutenant in my road-agent band, before I left them."

"Ah! that is good. Do you think you would know him, at sight?"

"Certainly. I owe him a grudge, and shall not forget him. You want him in connection with this massacre affair, eh?"

"Yes." Then the sheriff showed him the paper, and related what he knew on the subject of the attack and murder.

"Cambre and Graylford's son were undoubtedly in the plot," Dick said, after listening attentively. "Cambre is sly and wary, yet I know him to be a villain. You have proof enough to hang him. Follow up your clue, after the description I have given you, and let me know the result."

"When will I see you again?"

"Impossible to say, as my movements are uncertain. A letter left on this rock, however, will reach me. This is Deadwood Dick's post office!"

Then, after a few more words and a cordial handshake, the two men separated, Murrill descending into the gulch, and tramping off toward Eureka, which lay some six miles below.

Startling and crushing was the intelligence the note brought to poor Leone Harris—that the only man she had thought her friend, was in reality an enemy. And it was his intention to attempt the kidnapping of her babe, that the innocent thing might be delivered into the hands of this Deadwood Dick No. 2. Who was this Deadwood Dick No. 2?

"Oh, Nellie!" the poor young wife exclaimed, tears coursing down her pale cheeks. "What shall I do? Where shall I go? What does it all mean?"

"It means that there is more deviltry afloat than we have imagined. I did not like the looks of that Carlos Cambre. He is a villain," replied the girl.

"Ah! it seems so, but I never thought him other than a friend before. But now that I think of it, he has several times said things to me that were unwarranted and ungentlemanly. Nellie, do you know what I begin to believe?"

"No, sweet sister—what?"

"This—that my husband hates me, and by doing away with the child and then with myself he intends to free himself of marriage bonds, so that he will again be at liberty to woo and win."

"Surely you do not think him so base as this, Mrs. Harris?"

"Maybe I am very wrong, but I cannot see how else these things can be."



"Ah! you are greatly at fault, my dear. Deadwood Dick is not such a villain, I am well satisfied, from what little I saw of him. Perhaps this Dick No. 2 is some one who has a grudge against Dick No. 1, and takes the method of striking at him through you."

"Ah, Nellie, you are an angel!" Leone said, laying Master Dick upon the bed and embracing her friend. "You can see things in a truer light than I. Of course my Dick is no such villain, and I have deeply wronged him by my unjust suspicion. But, what shall I do? It is necessary that I should find another place, as I will no longer be safe here. My poor baby Dick! In the morning I will take you to the Big Bonanza Mine, where Avalanche is, and he will protect us."

So they remained up through the long night, watching for the first streak of light in the eastern sky heralding the approach of dawn.

Morning came at last, cloudy and dull, with a prospect of a long, drizzling rain, such as the autumnal months bring.

Nell was the owner of a couple of saddle-horses, and mounted upon these, the two girls rode through the town, and up the gulch in the direction of Deadwood Dick's Bonanza.

Nothing was seen of Carlos Cambre, and a hope entered Leone's heart that she would yet escape him.

But alas! how suddenly hopes may be blasted.

They were yet a quarter of a mile from the entrance to the mine, when, on looking back, they beheld Cambre coming furiously on in pursuit, his animal covered with flecks of foam.

He was not to be defeated!

## CHAPTER X

### INVASION

THAT night following the flight of Leone and Nellie from Eureka, found the Man-Trap saloon filled to overflowing, both with miners and men-about-town, together with the newcomers fetched in by the evening stage.

Deadwood Dick was among those within the room which constituted the saloon, but he was in deep disguise as a rough miner. He had a desire to see the wife of Carlos Cambre, whom, it will be remembered, he encountered on the first night of his arrival in Deadwood.

He spied the *petite* little figure ere long, flitting about and serving drinks to the thirsty patrons of the establishment.

It was some time before she passed where

he was lounging at a table, and he had a chance to hail her.

"What is it?" she demanded.

"Bring me a glass of light wine; also one for yourself. I wish to talk with you a while."

"Who are you?" she questioned, looking him over, suspiciously. "What do you want of me?"

"You will learn in time. Fear not, for I am Deadwood Dick!"

She gave a nervous start, as if the intelligence surprised her; then nodded her head and went away.

It was full an hour, and Dick was growing impatient, when she reappeared bringing the wine.

"Indeed! have you come at last? You must imagine a fellow's appetite is not strong!" he said.

"It is probably not stronger than that of these thirsty brutes around us," was the reply. "But, first, what do you want to know?—what brought you here?"

"Curiosity—longing for adventure—want of news," he replied, with a smile. "Where is your so-called husband—Carlos Cambre?"

"About town somewhere, plotting mischief, as usual. Went up the gulch to-day, after Noisy Nell and Leone——"

"What?" Deadwood Dick exclaimed, starting violently. "Leone, you say—surely not *my* Leone—my wife?"

"Yes, your wife, Mr. Harris. She is here; has been here for a couple of weeks. Cambre has got a plot afoot to steal her babe, and deliver it up to this Deadwood Dick No. 2, whoever that may be. I warned her, and saw her and Nell Brandon ride up toward Bonanza Basin. Cambre followed, and I would have done likewise, only that my attention was called to matters here."

"And you do not know what became of them, then?"

"No, but I think they were far enough ahead to reach the Bonanza before he overtook them."

"I hope so." He is a worse villain than I ever before took him to be. He was concerned in this Graylford massacre case."

"He was the head instigator of it!" Martha replied. "I know all about it. He and Graylford's son were in the plot together."

"Ah! you seem pretty well posted upon everything. How do you know so much?"

"I improve my spare time in shadowing my faithless husband and prying into his secrets. I find that there is a plot on the tapis, in which you are concerned. I cannot give you the full particulars now—not till I learn more. It appears that this Fordyce Graylford has a wife and son living by a



first marriage. He deserted his first wife—or she deserted him, it is hard to tell which—and wedded again. Now this first wife turns up, and as soon as she can produce her son-heir, whom she has traced here to Eureka, she intends to lay claim to the property—or, rather, intended to. But, something has happened which will for a time check her progress. Cambre entered into her service a few weeks ago, and has, while helping her trace this missing heir, learned the whole story, and stolen all her papers—marriage-certificate, birth-paper, and so forth—with the intention of taking the game into his own hands.”

“But what has all this to do with me?” Dick demanded, wonderingly.

“You are the *first and only lawful son of Cathie and Fordyce Graylford!*” replied Martha, in a low tone, that her words might not be overheard.

“Git out! what are you trying to give us now? My parents are long since in their grave, for which I am grateful to God, that they may not know the level to which their son has sunk,” Dick replied.

“I have reason to think that you never knew your true parents, sir, but cannot at present give you any further information. Cambre holds the trump card in the possession of those papers, and I shall try to get them from him. He believes you to be the heir, and will probably try to negotiate with you, when you meet. But, don’t mind him. Leave the matter to me, and all will yet come out right. See here!” and turning her back to the crowd, she partly opened the bosom of her dress. The glimpse Dick caught of a gleaming silver badge caused him to start.

“You are a——”

“Detective,” finished she, with a peculiar little laugh.

“But this is all a great surprise to me,” said Dick, “and I am naturally interested. I must now go and look after my wife, Leone, for should harm befall her, I could never forgive myself. I trust this matter in your hands, and when you learn anything, and wish to communicate, give a letter to Sheriff Murrill, and he will drop it in Deadwood Dick’s post-office.”

Then the young outlaw stalked toward the door of the saloon, looking strange in his rough dirty mining suit, and bushy red beard.

“Oh! heaven, we are lost!” Leone exclaimed, as she beheld Cambre spurring madly toward them.

“Do not despair, dear sister,” replied Noisy Nell, “for there is nothing to fear, for you. Ride on, until you reach the entrance to the mine. You will not go amiss,

for the sign ‘Deadwood Dick’s Bonanza’ will guide you toward the tunnel. Ride fearlessly through, and in the basin, beyond, you will find Old Avalanche.”

“And you, Nellie——”

“I will meet this villain, and turn him back.”

Saying which she reined in her steed, and whirled him around facing the coming horse-man, while Leone pushed desperately on toward the Bonanza Mines.

Noisy Nell waited with cool composure for the outlaw to come up, one of her fair hands grasping the bridle reins, and the other a small silver-plated revolver, which covered Cambre’s approach.

He rode furiously up, but reined in when he perceived that her finger pulled the revolver-hammer back to full-cock—and that the weapon never quavered a particle. He had heard of her prowess, and concluded it wisest to stop and hold a parley.

“Well?” he interrogated, his face flushed with anger, “what do you want?”

“What do you want?” she returned, putting question for question.

“I want to pass. Are you a highway robber, that you block the way?”

“If you choose, yes. You are in pursuit of Leone Harris and her boy. You ought to know that she is not without friends, and I will tell you further that any attempt to steal her child will be useless.”

The ex-lieutenant uttered a furious oath, and dropped his hand toward his belt. At the same time there was a flash and a report, followed by a howl of pain and rage, as a bullet from her revolver pierced his arm near the elbow, causing a stream of blood to spurt therefrom.

“That’s the ticket you get!” she cried, with a cool laugh.

Cambre uttered a fiercer curse than before. He turned his animal around, shaking his fist at Nell, with an expression of savage ferocity upon his countenance that would have frightened a less fearless girl. Then he dashed down the gulch toward Eureka.

Nell watched him till he had disappeared from view around the bend. Then she turned her own animal, and galloped toward Deadwood Dick’s Bonanza.

She rode on, and fifteen minutes later stood in the miner’s camp in Bonanza Basin. Leone was there, having arrived safely, and Old Avalanche was half tickled to death over her and young Master Dick. The old man was very fond of children, and he held the little bundle of humanity upon his knee, as proudly as if he were its grandfather.

The day passed quickly, and night once more threw her shadows over the land



Leone grew uneasy as darkness approached, for it brought to her a foreboding of danger. And it came.

One of the miners returning with the announcement that a crowd of armed, masked men were swarming into the basin!

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PHANTOM AGAIN

THE supposition was that Cambre had come with a gang of roughs to make an attack upon the camp, probably with the intention of capturing its supply of previously-mined gold, and Leone or her child.

"Great ham-bone thet old Joner gnawed on!" exclaimed the Annihilator, instantly springing to his feet. "To arms, boyees!"

The miners gathered in a compact body, and looked to their weapons. The fire was kicked out, and the blackness of the night became more intense.

The two women were thrust into the single tent, and this was surrounded by half of the men, while the other half, under command of Keno, by Avalanche's orders, withdrew to the further side of the gulch. When the attack should begin, they were to circle around the basin, to the tunnel entrance, thereby barring the escape of the enemy.

When this arrangement was made to his satisfaction, Avalanche, with Florence, the goat, trotting by his side, crept off to reconnoitre.

He crept stealthily along, and not less cautiously followed his companion, the billy-goat.

"Steady, Florence, gal; not much noise as ther 'skeeter made when he fell down-stairs and broke his neck. Keerful, like," the veteran cautioned, as they skulked along. "'Sh!"

Both stopped stock-still, and listened.

Then a wild shout arose from a different portion of the basin, and there was a roar of fire-arms that broke in upon the stillness of the night.

Avalanche scrambled to his feet, and, rifle in hand, plunged away toward the sound of the conflict, which appeared to be at the camp, or in close proximity to it. Florence followed close at his heels.

The two circled around, and reached the camp from another-side, a few moments later. The firing had ceased, and he found that after a feint of attack the enemy had withdrawn, probably only to prepare for a fiercer and more determined onslaught.

Of their number those in the camp had no idea, except that there were swarms of them all armed with rifles.

Just then a rifle report rang out, and one of the miners dropped in his tracks, with a groan. Then came a series of triumphant yells, but no attack. The enemy were manœuvring, and picking off a man whenever opportunity offered.

Thus matters stood at midnight.

Neither the outlaws nor the miners had apparently gained any advantage, for several had fallen on either side, making the loss about even.

The suspense of waiting was more harrowing to the miners than would have been a pitched battle.

But matters could not forever remain thus, and a short time after midnight an attack was made in earnest, from the north and south side of the basin.

The half of the men under Little Alf Coyle took things coolly, and fought with a desperate precision that told upon the enemy, who wilted rapidly under a deliberate fire.

Nothing as yet had been heard from the men under Keno, although a signal had twice been given for assistance. Their delay appeared unaccountable.

Finally the enemy withdrew again, greatly weakened in numbers, and when they renewed the attack they had consolidated their separated forces into one body, on the south side. Then on they came once more.

But bravely the miners met the onset, striking for life and liberty with a decision that was in itself heroic. Slowly but surely, the weaker party was driven back toward the northern wall of the basin, and they must have suffered total defeat, only that when all seemed lost, there was a shout of encouragement, and Keno and his men attacked the outlaws in the rear, mowing them down like grain before the reaper.

Unexpected by the ruffians was this timely aid. They made a feeble attempt at resistance, but in vain. They were shot down without mercy, not a man escaping the death he so richly deserved.

Victory was awarded the brave miners of Deadwood Dick's Bonanza, but at what cost! Out of a gang of thirty men, thirteen had pulled their last trigger. Nor was this all.

During the last attack the defenders had drifted away from the camp, which was left for the time unguarded. As soon as the last shot had been fired, Avalanche and Little Alf hurried toward the tent, where the two girls had been left, but, to their horror, found that they were missing.

Ex-Lieutenant Carlos Cambre was the instigator of the attack upon the Bonanza



miners, but he took no part in it. He left all the management to one Jean Jago, a confederate in crime, while he remained just outside the tunnel-entrance, in Eureka gulch. His orders had been to kill off the miners, take possession of the mine, and the two girls, Leone and Noisy Nell. As soon as the victory was complete, he was to be thus informed by a messenger, when he would come in and take command.

Outside in the gulch he waited for the messenger to appear, but in vain. Midnight came, but still no messenger.

"Can it be that the fools have let that handful of dirt-diggers whip them?" he growled, angrily. "Curse the luck! I will have to go and see for myself."

It did not take him long to reach the basin, and he discovered that all was as he surmised. He saw the miners hurrying about with torches, conspicuous among them being Avalanche and his goat. This told him that his men were extinct or had been taken prisoners.

"They are searching for some one or something!" he muttered. "Perhaps it is the two females? Some of my men may have smuggled them off, and are waiting for a chance to escape. In that case they will bring them to head-quarters, so I will get out, lest I be seen, and this crime be thrown upon my good name."

He laughed sarcastically at the idea, and then turned back into the tunnel, and after a brisk walk of a few moments he gained the end opening out into the gulch, and was about to step out, when his gaze became riveted upon an apparition so frightful, that he was rooted to the spot, and a deathly pallor came over his dusky features. That mysterious spirit of the air, the Phantom Miner, stood only a few yards away in all its ghostly weirdness.

Cambre trembled in every limb, but was powerless to move, and a clammy perspiration broke out upon his face.

Nearer and nearer came the Phantom, until but a few feet only intervened between them; then there was a strange rattling, as of skeleton bones, and a low, unearthly laugh, such as might emanate from such a creature as this.

Words came, after a pause, in a low, sepulchral voice, hardly above a whisper, yet loud enough for the ears of Cambre.

"Man, thou hast burdened thy soul with crime—dyed thy hand deep in the blood of thy fellow-men. Retribution will be thine: God's holy hand shall smite thee. Make what reparation thou canst, while life remains. Give up the papers thou hast stolen unto me, or the fire of vengeance shall shine in the heaven, and a thunderbolt shall plough the earth at thy feet."

The words sent a deeper horror into the heart of Cambre.

"I have not the papers here. They are locked up in my room, in Eureka!" he gasped, in terror. "Here is the key, or I will bring them to you!"

"Bring them!" returned the Phantom, tersely. "Put them in thy purse, and we will meet again."

Then, to his great horror, the spectre began to rise slowly, and he saw it float up into the blackness, and disappear from view.

"God forbid that we ever meet again," the terrified villain muttered, as he leaped into the gulch, and sped away.

## CHAPTER XII

### "THE KIND OF A MAN I AM!"

NOT yet was it morning, when Cambre sighted the city, yet all the saloons, stores and gambling-dens were in full blast.

Cambre's terror, owing to his long run, had somewhat abated, by the time he reached the town, though traces of pallor still were visible upon his swarthy visage. He had never before experienced such a fright.

"Curse the thing," he muttered, biting fiercely at his moustache, "how did it come to know that I had possession of the papers? Curses, I say; I'll not surrender those papers—*never!* Graylford will soon die, then there will be no one to dispute *my* right to this fortune. Let Deadwood Dick go to the devil!"

"Oh! no; not to the devil yet, my larkie!" cried a sarcastic voice, and a horse-man wheeled out of an alley directly in front of the ex-lieutenant, whose words had been spoken loud enough to be heard.

And there was an ominous click! click of the revolver the road-agent held in his hand.

"Oh! no! no! I did not mean you—I meant the other Deadwood Dick—the real one!"

"Ah! but I am the *real* one!"

"The devil you say! Then I meant the other one—the counterfeit."

"Bosh! That's too transparent now, you accursed rogue. You are playing two trumps in a deck, eh? I've a notion to plug the daylights right out of you!"

But Cambre put up his hands.

"Don't shoot! don't shoot!" he cried, supplicatingly. "I have been faithful to your interests, and tried to capture the brat——"

"Tried? and failed, eh?"

"Yes. I took sixty men—I alone escaped death!"



"You ought to have gone with the rest. Why didn't you steal the brat before the girl got out of town?"

"Because some unknown person warned them, and they fled before I had the opportunity."

"They are all at the Bonanza mines, then?"

"Yes, and it would require an army to dislodge them."

"I care not how many armies it takes. You *must* steal the brat, and fetch it to me. But, how will I know when you get it? Let me see. There is a post-office in Eureka. You may post a letter informing me that you have the child, and where to meet you. Address it to Slippery Sim."

"Very well. But, I see no way I can possibly get the youngster——"

"Which makes no difference to me. You *must* get him, or on the twenty-sixth of November you *die*," Deadwood Dick No. 2 said, grimly. "Remember. But a few days remain in which to accomplish your work."

Then the black horseman turned his animal's head, and rode leisurely away, while Cambre kept on toward the centre of the town.

In the meantime, while the two were engaged in conversation, a figure had glided by them and sought the Man-Trap saloon, which was crowded with drunken roughs and miners.

The figure, when revealed under the flaring lamplight, was that of the boss poker-player from Virginia City, the counterpart of Deadwood Dick, who called himself Red-Hot Harris.

Fearlessly he entered the saloon, and sauntered about, watching those around him with an eagle glance.

Martha Cambre saw him, and, when general attention was called to a rough-and-tumble fight in another part of the saloon, she glided to his side.

"What! you here again?" she said, laying her hand upon his arm.

"Hello! what struck you, miss?" Red-Hot ejaculated, staring at the little figure and pretty face, in evident amazement. "I rather guess you're barkin' up the wrong tree."

"Oh! pshaw! you can't pull coarse wool over my eyes," Martha retorted, with a laugh. "I'm no fool, though I look it."

"Eh? you ain't?" the poker-player said, perplexedly. "Who are you?"

"I am Martha Cambre," the deserted wife of Carlos Cambre replied, with a merry twinkle in her eyes. "You are Deadwood Dick!"

The poker-player groaned audibly; then muttered a curse.

"By Heaven! again is this confounded

brother of mine thrown up in my face. I say, girl, supposing you had a sister who was not as good as she might be. Would you like it if people were to constantly take you for her?"

"No. But *you* are no brother of this Deadwood Dick. He told me so while here to-night. And now, who are you—Deadwood Dick, or his double? It is a question I *must* know—and you can answer it."

Harris whistled a few notes from a quaint mountaineer's song, whirled around upon his heel; then stared straight at Martha, quizzically.

"I am Red-Hot Harris," he said, positively.

"You are Deadwood Dick," the little detective persisted, coolly. "Do you know what happened at Bonanza mine to-night?"

"How should I?" with a blank look.

And the young gentleman turned away, as if the conversation was growing monotonous.

He kept his eye upon one man in the room, and that man was Roxly, the Regulator, who was watching him as the hawk watches its prey.

Suddenly the eyes of the pokerist gleamed angrily and he elbowed his way through the crowd, a path clearing immediately when it was seen that he held a pair of six-shooters in his hands.

Straight up to the bar, and on to it leaped the youth.

"Gentlemen!" he cried, his voice ringing out clearly, "there is a little matter I wish to settle, here in your presence. When first I came to Eureka, I posted a five hundred dollar reward paper upon these walls, meaning it should stay there. Some meddlesome loafer has insulted me by tearing it down. I want to see that chap, and bu'st his head—that's the kind of hairpin I am!"

Not a murmur came from the crowd, as the young bravo was speaking, but when he had finished Old Roxly stepped forward, a grim, puckering expression about his mouth.

"*You*, was it?" Red-Hot exclaimed, a sternness in his glance that forcibly reminded the Regulator of Deadwood Dick.

Roxly laughed, sarcastically.

"Yes, I did it," he replied, with a grin of triumph, "because I knowed it was only intended ter give us fellers ther *blind* staggers. D'ye want anything o' me, younker?"

"Decidedly, yes. Please make a ring, feller-citizens, and we'll have this bizness through with."

Red-Hot leaped to the floor, and jerked off his jacket and belt, and laid them on the bar.



"Hello! what d'ye intend to do?" Roxly demanded.

"To fight you, and black both of your eyes, smash your nose, ram your teeth down your throat, polish off your chin, and generally demolish you," replied Red-Hot, grimly. "Come! strip yourself."

"No, I thank you. We'll try other weapons than fists," the Regulator sneered. "I'm no prize-fighter."

"Nor I, but I ain't 'fraid to try you a whirl. That's the kind of a man I am! If you acknowledge yourself a coward, don't come and see me."

The Regulator stepped into the ring, without removing his coat or belt.

"No shamming now!" warned Red-Hot, as he spat on his hands. "If you try to use any of those implements in your belt I'll take your life, instead of some of the conceit out of you. One, two, three, now."

Both men sprang forward and toed the mark, and then began a bout of parrying and thrusting, interesting both to the spectators and the parties concerned.

Roxly, it soon became evident, was no slouch at the business, for he was wary, defensive, and agile as a cat. But he was no match for Red-Hot Harris, the "boss" from Virginia City, which soon became evident from the battered appearance of his enemy's countenance. But Roxly grew desperate the more he was punished, and sprang forward to clinch in a death-hug.

Foolish was this attempt, however, for Red-Hot coolly rained a shower of blows down into his battered face which staggered him back. Still he was undaunted, and rushed forward, but a terrible blow from Harris's clenched white fist hurled him back against the bar in a heap.

With a curse he drew a revolver, and despite the fact that he had been warned that such an action would be his death-warrant, he sent a bullet, well-aimed, toward the pokerist's heart.

A cry of indignation came from the crowd at this juncture.

But Red-Hot only laughed contemptuously, and placed his hand upon his heart.

"My heart is too hard for such leaden pellets to penetrate, gentlemen; and as for you, you coward," turning to Roxly, who had regained his feet, "your life shall pay the forfeit."

He leaped upon the Regulator and bore him to the floor, and in another moment the revolver was pressed to the temple, and there came a report. Wounded was Roxly, but not dead!

Then Red-Hot sprang to his feet, and swung the still smoking weapon above his head.

"Does any man want to say I didn't do

it fair?" he cried, his eyes blazing. "Speak out, and I'll show ye the kind of a man I am!"

A cheer rent the air.

"Hurra! ther boy did it fair—jes' 's fair as ary man ken do!" came the response from a dozen lungs. "Hurra fer Red-Hot!"

A general good-will toward the young pokerist seemed manifest, and drinks were ordered all around.

Harris did not imbibe, but donning his jacket and belt, betook himself from the saloon into the gulch.

It was just then the darkest hour before the dawn of the coming day.

Very few were now abroad; one horseman was riding leisurely through the gulch, and at him Red-Hot gave only a casual glance. His mind was too busied with other thoughts to notice that he was followed, and that, too, by the lone horseman.

He was not aware of the fact until he saw a noose settle over him, and draw taut above his waist, pinioning his arms to his side, and jerking him to the ground.

The next moment he felt a revolver-muzzle pressed to his temple, and a full-masked face bending over him.

"Ha! ha!" cried a voice, evidently a disguised one, "so this is my man, is it? Good-morning, Deadwood Dick No. 1! Sorry to see you in such a plight, but there was no other way to get at you. Allow me to introduce myself—your double, Deadwood Dick No. 2!"

A curse escaped Red-Hot's lips.

"What means this foolery?" he demanded, angrily.

"It means," replied No. 2, with a chuckle, "that you are my prisoner. I have been awaiting the opportunity to capture you for a long while."

## CHAPTER XIII

### A BOLD PLAN

THE announcement caused a flame of deeper anger to flush the cheek of Red-Hot Harris.

He was no coward, but he saw that for the present attempted resistance would be worse than useless—would ensure his speedy death.

"Well, I suppose there is no help for it," Harris growled, rising to his feet. "Whither away, you cuss?"

"Straight ahead, up the gulch. Turn only on order, and attempt to draw no weapon, and all will be right. Forward!"

Red-Hot stalked off, biting savagely at his lip, while No. 2 followed closely behind.



keeping hold of the lasso with one hand, and grasping his revolver with the other. Bound was he that the boss poker-player should not escape him, if vigilance could prevent it.

The march was a long and tiresome one. Day dawned, and tinged the peaks rosy red; still the tramp continued, nor did it end until noon, when they entered a mountain cave, far above the level of the western plains.

"Here we are at last!" the bogus Deadwood Dick cried, as they entered the cave. "Wake up, Corkus, and disarm this fellow and bind him. He is the bird I have been planning to entrap."

Corkus deprived Red-Hot of all the weapons on his person, and pushed him away into a corner where there were plenty of skins to lie upon.

This done, Le and No. 2 retired to the portion of the cave where the fire was burning, leaving the unlucky poker-player to his reflections.

In the Bonanza mine great excitement prevailed, on the discovery that Leone and her babe, and Nell Brandon, were missing from the tent. Only two surmises could be made concerning their absence—either they had become frightened and fled in terror to get out of the path of the flying bullets, or else they had been captured by some of the ruffians, and spirited away. This seemed the more probable, and search was immediately made in the basin, which resulted in the discovery by Little Alf and Avalanche, of Nellie Brandon, lying insensible, not far from the camp. An ugly cut upon her forehead, over the temple, had evidently caused her unconsciousness.

Water was dashed into Nellie's face, and her hands gently chafed, but it was some time ere she recovered consciousness sufficiently to tell what had occurred. She seemed dazed and bewildered, but a swallow of liquor from Keno's flask seemed to right her memory, and she glanced around her with a shudder.

"Are they gone?" she gasped.

"Bet yer life—gone whar ther whang-doodle twineth an' the woodbine——"

"There! don't quote emmy rimes, please!" growled Avalanche, in disgust, "especially, if you can't do it skientific. No, miss, thar ain't a live outlaw prisent, 'cept w'at's layin' around dead. Whar's Mrs. Leone?"

"Oh! she's gone! she's gone!" Nellie cried, bursting into tears. "We ran out of the tent to escape the danger of being cut down by the bullets, and two men saw and followed us. One man snatched the babe from her arms, and fled. She ran screaming

in pursuit, and I would have followed her, only that the other man struck me, and I knew no more."

"Wal, we'll hope for the best," the Annihilator said, soberly. "We'll wait till daylight, and then endeavour to start up a trail."

The rest of the miners now came flocking irregularly into camp, with the report that there was no one alive within the basin except themselves, nor any signs of the missing Leone and her child.

Which forced the conclusion that she had been borne off by the two ruffians, to imprisonment or death.

The next morning Avalanche saddled Prudence Cordelia, and prepared for his departure. Noisy Nell having concluded to go back to her post in the Man-Trap, was comfortably mounted upon the old mare, the Annihilator having volunteered to give her passage as far as Eureka, where he and Little Alf proposed to go first, having left the mine in Keno's charge.

The day after the battle at Deadwood Dick's Bonanza, Bolton rushed into Cathie's room pell-mell, like some overjoyed school-boy.

"Good news, so cheer up!" he cried, dropping his beaver, and seating himself. "Deadwood Dick, or Ned Harris, is here in Eureka!"

Cathie looked up, a hopeful, anxious expression upon her face.

"Really, truly?" she demanded, as if she doubted the fact. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am sure. There are evidently two Deadwood Dicks, according to all report, and then there is another fellow, who calls himself Red-Hot Harris, who looks as much like your notorious son as yourself, and you very much resemble him."

"Yes; but which of these three is my son?"

"Ah! that's the stick. No one seems to know which is genuine. But I shall keep watch, and endeavour to find out."

"I have a little more hope, then. But did you hear from Ferdye?"

"Yes; he is no better. The man in attendance, who pretends to have an extended knowledge of surgery, says that he cannot live the week out. His wounds and old age cannot but use him up."

"Poor man," Cathie said, wiping away the tears that had risen to her eyes.

"It will be necessary," the attorney said gravely, "for you to go and see him before he dies. Perhaps he might be willing to conciliate. I will keep informed of his condition, and take you at the right time. In the meantime, I have work on hand.



This Carlos Cambre, it appears, has a wife living here in Eureka, who is in the detective business, having put the harness on her own back when her father died. She accosted me to-day, and we had a long talk. She knows all about our business here, and Cambre's theft of the documents, which keep us from working. We are going to attempt to break into his room to-night, and re-steal them."

"Oh! God grant that you may be successful, sir," the lady muttered, as Bolton took his departure.

That evening about the hour Cambre was supposed to be at supper, Bolton met Martha near the Man-Trap saloon, and they hurried away.

Cambre had rooms in a lodging-house at the further side of the village, and got his meals at a restaurant some distance from his rooms, so that the plan of the two promised to be successful, if they could only find the villain out. When in sight of the lodging-house, Martha left Bolton, and went to see if the ex-lieutenant was at a neighbouring restaurant, where she hoped to find him.

She soon returned to the attorney with the announcement that he was there, drinking with a half-dozen of Deadwood Dick's old band, who had just arrived on the evening stage.

"Now, come on, and the papers are ours!" she said. "I have a duplicate key of the room. Get your revolvers in readiness, and follow me."

They hurried up the street, and entered the building, ascending a pair of stairs to the second floor. It was a general lodging-house, and no one of the two or three persons encountered noticed them.

Martha led the way to Cambre's room, and for precaution knocked upon the door; *and there was a halloo from within!*

## CHAPTER XIV

### AN ASTONISHING DISCOVERY

RED-HOT HARRIS was left lying in one corner of the cave, and was not again molested during the day. Corkus brought him a slice of venison and a cup of water, at dark, upon which to appease his appetite, which had been keenly aroused by his long tramp.

A short while after, Deadwood Dick No. 2 came, and seated himself near the prisoner, as if for a talk. He was still attired in the jet black suit of buckskin, with gloves, hat and mask to match, which made him such a clever imitation of the genuine Ned Harris.

"Do you know what I have brought you here for, sir?" he asked.

"No; I am sorry to say that I haven't the slightest idea, sir road-agent."

"Well, then, I will tell you. Deadwood Dick, when you left your wife, and came here, I found your wife was about to follow: so I came also. My heart was filled with bitterness, which gradually dissipated into resolve. I have lately found that she is the mother of a child—*yours* as well as hers; and this discovery caused a definite plan of attack against you. Ned Harris, you will find that you have one to deal with, who will fight out this duel—yes, exterminate everything in my path that is human, to attain my object."

"Humph!" Red-Hot drawled, coolly. "I really do wish, if you must talk, that you would say something more interesting to me. I care nothing about your quarrel with this notorious Deadwood Dick, nor your contemplated revenge. If you know any new points about poker or keno, I shall be pleased to hear from you."

No. 2 evidently would have been relieved if he could have given vent to a round oath; but for some reason he withheld it.

"Hang the poker," he growled. "What I want is for you to acknowledge that you are Deadwood Dick, and then I will surprise you."

"You'll wait till your teeth decay, I'm thinkin', before I shall acknowledge anything of the kind!" retorted Red-Hot. "Did I not tell you that Deadwood Dick is dead?"

"Yes; but you lied."

"Did I? No, I think not. Deadwood Dick is dead: Edward Harris *lives!*"

"Ah! I see," No. 2 said, comprehendingly; "and you are Edward Harris?"

"I am!" was the reply.

"Then why this attempt at deception—this Red-Hot business?"

"The name was suggested by hearing a fellow call me a red-hot customer to deal with. When I left the Hills, I dropped the name of Deadwood Dick—buried it as we bury the dead, intending never to use it again. But I find that to be an impossibility. I came here as Harris, and they recognized me, and I braved them down. Then I shaved off the hair that had grown upon my face, and reappeared as Red-Hot Harris. The character, by considerable 'cheeking' and 'brass,' was partially successful. I guess the Eureka-ites are convinced that I am Red-Hot Harris!"

"Probably. I knew you were Deadwood Dick—the eyes of love are harder to deceive than those of uninterested curiosity-seekers."

Harris started, and gazed keenly at the



speaker, a wrinkle disfiguring the placidity of his forehead.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, suspiciously. "By heaven! can it be *you*, Leone, in disguise?"

There was a bitter little laugh of sarcasm; then the answer:

"No, *not* Leone; she would have more leniency on you than I shall have. Wait a moment and you shall see whom you have to expect mercy from."

Saying which, No. 2 arose and glided away into the darkness of the cave. It was some ten minutes later when a slight, girlish figure reappeared and stood before the ex-road-agent; and he started violently, and uttered an exclamation of astonishment:

"My God! is that you, *Edith Stone*?"

"Yes, it is I, Ned Harris—the girl who loved and still worships you—the girl who has schemed for many long days, and now has you in her power."

"My Heaven! I thought you were dead—drowned in the Little Madrass, girl," Deadwood Dick replied, gazing at her wonderingly. "But, instead, I see you before me, as foolishly and hopelessly blind as you were before."

"No, not hopelessly, Dick. You are *mine*, now, beyond all other claim—*mine* forever. I don't suppose you will become reconciled to your lot for a while, but I can 'bring you to your oats,' as the expression goes. If love and feminine persuasion won't do it, *force* will!"

"Ah! you are combining force with infatuation, eh?" Dick said, slowly. "What force could you use, that you for one moment imagine would make Deadwood Dick yield—give up his honour, his manhood, to lead a doubtful life with you?"

"It need not be doubtful; you could take me, East and marry me. As to the force, I shall soon come into possession of your infant son. You shall then swear, by all you hold sacred, that you will marry me, or Corkus shall cut the brat's throat from ear to ear, right in your presence."

Dick did not reply. He saw that she was terribly in earnest, and he wondered how he was to find extrication from this dilemma, which involved not only himself, but his darling Leone, whom he now loved tenfold more than ever before.

Old Avalanche and Little Alf conducted Noisy Nell to Eureka, and set her down in front of the Man-Trap.

Then they stabled Prudence Cordelia, and with the eccentric goat following at their heels, wandered about town, using their eyes and ears, and instigating inquiries after Leone.

But they were not successful. Nothing had been seen of her, and they finally arrived at the conclusion that she had not come back to town.

"Sh! steady! d'ye see them two fellers a-comin' down ther gulch?" Little Alf said, pointing out from the crowd two men who were coming into the town from the direction of the Big Bonanza. "D'ye see 'em?"

"Yes—two rough-looking pilgrims, evidently miners—one wi' a bag o' sumthin' slung behind his back."

"Karect! an' don't et enter yer organ o' phrenology, thet thar mought be sumthin' in thet bag as would suit our fastidgeous tastes?" was the query, and the young scout watched the approaching men narrowly.

While they were speaking the two "toughs" had mingled in with the crowd that swarmed in the gulch, and were lost from view. Cursing their own stupidity, both Coyle and Avalanche sprang forward and elbowed their way along in pursuit, but all in vain. Their most careful efforts failed to discover the pair of villains, or where they had gone to.

"We'll not give up, yit," said Old Avalanche. "Thar's thet Careless Cambre; the babe will doubtless be delivered inter *his* hands. It tharfore behooves us ter keep our optical masheenery glued onter him."

They wandered about aimlessly during the day—not really aimlessly, for they were constantly looking for Cambre, whom Avalanche had once seen, and thought he should be able to recognize again.

Little Alf was a good poker-player, and so they went into the Man-Trap saloon and amused themselves for a while. Noisy Nell came around to their table shortly, perhaps because she was very favourably impressed with the looks and apparent worth of Coyle.

He was not a bad-looking fellow himself, twenty-five summers in this wayward world having dealt with him kindly.

"Hev ye seen anything o' Careless Cucumber?" Avalanche demanded, as she came up.

"No. He has not been in here since I came," the girl replied, glancing searchingly around her. "Have you found any tidings of Mrs. Harris?"

"Nary a tidy, my gal. Saw a couple o' 'toughs'—one kerried a bag on his back, in w'ich a baby might have been concealed—but they flung us."

"Those same men came in here and lubricated," Nell announced, "and then went out again."

"The deuce they did! An' did one tote a bag o' sumthin' on his nigh shoulder, w'ich mought 'a' bin a baby, or a condensed 'arthquake?"



"Yes!"

"Which way'd they go?"

"I cannot tell. I did not watch them; only noticed them by chance."

Avalanche and Little Alf rose to their feet simultaneously.

"We may trap 'em by visitin' the different saloons," Coyle said.

They went out, and made a round of all the saloons, without result, until they were issuing from the last one, when they came face to face with Carlos Cambre.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE PAPERS

MARTHA CAMBRE and Lawyer Bolton shrank back in alarm as a voice from within the room responded to the little woman's knock. A shrill halloo it was; in a woman's voice, evidently.

"What shall we do? This is a deuce of a scrape to be caught in," Bolton gasped, clutching Martha by the arm. "Our game is balked; let us escape."

"You can go, if you want to," Martha replied, calmly. "I ain't quite so far gone as to back out now"; and as if to carry out her assertion, she took a little shining revolver from among the folds of her dress.

"Halloa! w'at the debbil you's want?" came again from the inside.

"Ah! that is the explanation," Martha said, in a whisper. "There is some negress inside, evidently caring for the room. Come on."

She glided forward and opened the door, which, as she had surmised, was unlocked. Another moment and she and Bolton were inside the room, with the door locked behind them.

An old negress, with a face as black as coal, and hair white and woolly, was engaged in sweeping the room. But she stopped stock-still, rooted to the floor with horror, when she beheld the intruders, and the pair of revolvers the worthy attorney and counsellor-at-law held levelled toward her.

"Oh! de Lordy sakes alive! Oh! goodness gracious!" she gasped. "Don't shoot, marster—don't hurt a poor ole woman w'at can't help herself. I be's innercent—'deed I is, for shuah!"

"Yes, you're an innocent old idiot, sure enough," Bolton replied. "Just you keep quiet, and we'll not hurt you. Go on, miss, and see if you can discover the papers."

"You had better stand near the door with your back against it!" Martha replied. "My villainous husband may be along at any moment, and it would be dangerous for him to discover us in this room. I will turn things topsy-turvy to find the papers."

She was as good as her word in this respect. She set to work, first, and went through the contents of a large old-fashioned desk, then a bureau and washstand, but without satisfactory result.

"I think there is a secret compartment in this old desk," Martha said at last, pausing before the structure of walnut, which was an oddity in the way of curious pigeon-holes and drawers. "But I do not know how to find it. Is there anybody in the room below or those adjoining, old woman?"

"No, missus. Dar's berry few in de buildin' at this hour."

"Good. Let me out, Mr. Bolton, and I will go down and procure an axe with which to knock this old shell apart."

Bolton obeyed by unlocking the door and letting her out into the passage.

She was not gone long, however, soon returning with a heavy ore bar as a substitute for the axe, which she could not find.

At Bolton's request she surrendered the bar to him, while she took his revolver and stood guard at the door.

He then attacked the old desk with a will, and soon had it lying apart in different sections, without creating any great noise.

Sure enough a secret drawer was discovered in which were a package of papers, tied in an oil-silk wrapper. There was also a quantity of money, which, no doubt, also belonged to Cambre. This was all.

"The papers! the papers!" Bolton cried, leaping forward and seizing them in his grasp. "Victory is ours at last."

He tore off the wrapper and hastily glanced them over.

"They are here," he said, exultantly—"the genuine ones, and the copies Cambre drew from them!"

Avalanche and Alf Coyle uttered not a word as they faced Cambre in front of the saloon, but pushed by him as if they did not recognize him—which the scout, Little Alf, did not, never having seen him before. But Cambre recognized the Annihilator by the goat; and, too, he recognized him as the same individual who had once knocked him down in front of Deadwood Dick's cell.

"Hello!" he cried, following up, and slapping the old man on the shoulder heavily. "Hold up, old rackabones, if ye don't want'er git plugged. I recognize you."

"Oh! you do!" Avalanche said, turning around with a "six" in his grasp, full cocked and ready for use. "Wal, thet ain't nothin' singyler, since I recky you. Guess thar's a picture rabbin' etself ag'in' your visage, ain't thar, o' how beauchiful I laid you out, not more'n a month ago? I 'spect yer want'er see yer uncle on thet score, eh?"



"Oh! no!" Cambre replied, smiling graciously, as he saw the Annihilator had the drop on him. "I just chanced to recognize you, and wanted to ask you if you had seen Deadwood Dick, lately?"

"Nixy; hain't seen ther lad since the day we arriv' in Eureka. But, ef ye wanter fight, et's all right. Hayr's what kin accomnydate ye."

"Oh, no, thanks; my inclinations don't run in that channel," the ex-lieutenant replied, turning away.

"Now, then, boyee, we've gotter keep our orbs on him!" Avalanche whispered to Coyle. "I bet he gits the baby afore midnight, unless we intercept it, w'ich we must try to do."

"Yes, the papers are all here," Bolton repeated, counting them over—"the marriage-certificate, the birth-certificate of Cathie's child, and others of minor or greater importance."

"I am truly grateful to God for this success," Martha said, reverently; "but come, let us hasten from this place, before my husband returns, or he will kill us. Ha! the negress has escaped—how negligent of me!"

"Curse the woman," Bolton exclaimed, angrily. "It will not do for us to try and escape——"

"Very truly spoken!" interrupted a cool, sarcastic voice, and Carlos Cambre's commanding form stood in the doorway, accusingly. "It will not do for you to try to escape with those papers in your possession. Drop them, and you can depart in peace."

"I'd drop you, if I had the 'drop' on you!" the attorney growled.

At this juncture Cambre's gaze rested for the first on Martha. He reeled back with a frightful curse.

"Martha! here!" he gasped, his face growing first white and then flushed.

"Yes, Martha is here!" the deserted wife replied scornfully; but in the second of Cambre's surprise he had lowered his aim, and she quickly took advantage of this opportunity to cover him with her revolvers—"here, but not to claim you for a husband. Step aside and let us pass. No; go down ahead of us, or I'll blow your brains out!"

He growled not unlike some fierce wild beast when he saw where he had failed, in allowing them to gain a point.

"I won't go!" he declared stubbornly.

"You will!" Martha assured, triumphantly, and back came her revolver-hammers, click! click! to full-cock.

"One, two——"

Cambre uttered a fierce curse, and leaping along the passage to the head of the stairs,

made a mighty spring. A flash from Martha's revolver followed him; then they ran forward and found him lying on the landing below, with his right arm broken, and a bullet-wound in his leg. But he clutched a pistol in his left hand, and there was a gleam of desperation in his eye that foreboded evil.

"Halt where you are!" he cried, levelling the weapon, "or I'll fire as long as there's a cartridge left, if it costs my life!"

"Come!" Martha said, pulling Bolton back. "We will be tempting death in trying to pass him. We can better escape from a window."

They hurried back into Cambre's room, locked the door behind them, and found that the one window, over whose surface cobwebs had been allowed to collect, was neither shuttered nor barred. The sash was easily taken out; and several bed-quilts, twisted and knotted together, furnished a mode of escape to the ground, so that in a few minutes the two were on the soil below, and hurrying away through the night's gloom.

It was a painful subject to think upon for Deadwood Dick—this puzzle of how he was going to escape from the cave, and prevent the terrible tragedy Edith Stone had outlined.

He was helpless in his bonds, which were of thongs of buckskin, and from which he saw no way of extricating himself. All his weapons had been taken from him, and he was wholly in the power of this desperate young woman—this girl whose love for him had utterly made her mad on the subject; for from the bottom of his heart Dick believed she was insane.

He lay a long while after she left him, turning the subject over in his mind.

Edith glided suddenly upon him, in the midst of his thoughts, like some haunting shadow.

"Oh! Dick!" she cried, kneeling beside him, and throwing her arms about his neck, with a passionate outburst of tears—"I love you so, oh! do please take me to your heart, and let us fly from here, to some spot where we can live as man and wife, in the fullness of our love. For the love of God, do not again put me off, for I do not want to commit this awful crime I have threatened."

"Nor need you," he replied. "I do not love you, and life with you would be a torture."

"Ah! you love the other!" she cried, with almost tigerish ferocity, a terrible gleam reddening her eyes.

"Yes, I love the other," he replied, firmly, "and always shall."

"Then she shall die, and the brat, too."



"But their death will not make you any the better off," he reasoned. "I cannot marry you, in either case."

"What! would you see them murdered before your eyes, rather than give up your future to me?"

"Yes, rather than become a bigamist, and promise devotion to a mad-woman!"

"A *what*?" she gasped, shrinking away from him.

"A mad-woman—a maniac, for you are no less. Were you in your right mind, Edith, you would never think of such a crime."

"Mad! mad!" she repeated, staggering to her feet, and pressing her hand to her forehead, as if it ached—"yes, perhaps I am mad—mad in love; but sane enough that no other woman shall ever possess you, my Prince. I will look to that with a perseverance that will some time astonish you."

"It will be useless. Your life will be only spent in vain."

"So it shall be, then. You will know no peace—that may in a measure appease my hunger for your love. I will haunt you day and night, like some terrible phantom. But, bah! why this parley? I can still win you by love, without resorting to harsher measures. See! I am going to free your limbs until morning, that you may rest better."

With a long bowie she cut the bonds about his feet, leaving his hands still confined.

Then she turned and swept away with the imperiousness of a queen. Deadwood Dick lay still for several hours after her departure, well knowing it would be useless to attempt to escape, until Corkus grew sleepy, and relaxed his vigil. But he worked silently at the bonds which confined his wrists. If he could but free his wrists, he had no fears but that he could escape.

Diligently he worked away, first soaking the thongs in a little pool of water which ran at his feet and then endeavouring to stretch them. It was a slow process, but eventually successful, for in a couple of hours he rejoiced in the freedom of both hands.

"Now, I guess it is a safe time to make an attempt to quit this place," he muttered, tightening his belt, and peering around into the gloom to see if his movements had been observed.

But apparently they had not.

"I wonder if the villainous guard is asleep?" Dick queried, hesitating before starting.

He stepped cautiously toward the entrance, his footfalls softer than those of a cat.

Closer and closer he moved, until he caught sight of the shadowy outline of the

sentinel, standing stationary in the entrance, grim and silent as some rock-carved statue.

His head was turned the other way, but Dick cared not for this. He stopped in his tracks and threw the whole force of his mind into his gaze, which he directed at the guard. And not long had he to wait for the effect.

Soon the man shuddered, and turned around, his bloodshot eyes coming instantly in contact with the gleaming orbs of Deadwood Dick. His gaze became fixed.

It was no use for him to resist. He could not break the spell that came over him, from the peculiar influence of the road-agent's all-powerful gaze. Like a statue he was rooted to the spot, immovable, of his own will, and powerless to speak.

"Ha! ha!" Dick laughed, in a low voice, "this is another victory. Now, the next act on the schedule is to get out of this, find Leone and my boy, and then forever quit this place."

## CHAPTER XVI

### PRIZE UPON PRIZE

OLD AVALANCHE and Little Alf were not far away at the time when Bolton and Martha left the big lodging-house. They had seen Cambre enter, and were crouching in the bushes, not far away, waiting for the men to come with the babe, as they calculated they eventually would.

"Great ham-bone thet deceived old Joner!" the Annihilator exclaimed, as first they heard the pistol-shot, and later saw the man and woman descend the bed-quilt ladder to the ground and hurry away. "Old Moses thet perambulated through the bull-rushes! Reckon thar's bin a tussle in thet aire dormitory, an' Careless Cucumber hes got his crop full. Thet ain't enny o' our hash, tho'. Ther percise individuals we're wantin', at present time, aire them two galoots, one o' whom hes got a bag slung over his shoulder. Shouldn't be surprised ef they'd be along afore a great while."

"Likely," assented Coyle, nibbling away at the end of a piece of plug tobacco reflectively. "But I argue that we had better git inside o' thet barn or dormitory, as ye call it, fer it'll be easier nabbin' our larkies thar than out hayr in ther gulch, whar there's chance fer bullets ter skip around so free."

Accordingly they crossed the gulch, and entered the big lodging-house, which was dark and gloomy.

On the first landing they found Carlos Cambre lying, groaning and cursing alternately over his inability to move, on account



of the painfulness of his wounded leg and broken arm.

"Hello! what are you doin' here, pilgrim?" Little Alf demanded of Cambre. "Seem ter be kinder out of tune, jedgin' frum yer music."

"I've been blown full of holes by a pair of knaves—a man and a woman!" the ex-road-agent replied.

Little Alf deprived the villain of his weapons, and then they carried him up to the room Bolton and Martha had recently ransacked, and laid him upon the bed.

Avalanche, then, with a skill that years of frontier life had perfected, set the broken arm, and dressed the wounded leg.

This relieved the unlucky plotter of some of his pain; but his rage was more intense than the pain when Avalanche securely gagged him, so that he could not utter a word.

This done, the two men seated themselves to await the coming of the two kidnappers.

And, fortune favouring them, they had not long to wait. Heavy footsteps were soon heard ascending the stairs, and presently two burly miners—the same the two scouts had seen before—entered the room, closing the door behind them. The next moment they were "covered" by the revolvers of Avalanche and his companion.

"Move an inch without orders, and you're both dead corpses!" Little Alf exclaimed, sternly.

The two ruffians stood stock-still, glaring around them in astonishment. Such a trap they had not expected to fall into.

"Oh! we've got you!" Coyle joined in, triumphantly, "without a doubt, so just hand over yer weapons, and done with it."

"Fork 'em over," added Avalanche.

Seeing that they were in the power of the two scouts, the ruffians obeyed the command, by delivering up a pair of revolvers and a knife, apiece.

"Now, then, be kind ernuff ter open thet bag, and gently remove the baby," ordered the Annihilator, coolly. "No roughness, now, or I'll salivate ye wi' lead fizzic fer all ye're worth."

With an angry growl the larger of the two men slung the bag from his shoulder, and deposited it upon the floor. Then he untied it, and took therefrom a little bundle of humanity, apparently fast asleep, with a bandage tied over its little mouth, to prevent its screams.

It was Deadwood Dick, Jr., sure enough, and Avalanche received it into his arms with a grin of delight.

The two ruffians were now bound hand and foot, after which our two friends quitted the lodging-house, Avalanche having restored the babe to the bag, and slung it over

his shoulder, to prevent attracting the attention of any one they might meet.

"Now, we'll go back to Bonanza Basin, wi' our prize!" he said. "I'll go on ahead, while you fetch Noisy Nell on ther back o' my mare Prudence."

"Why Noisy Nell?" Coyle asked.

"Why? Great ham-bone! won't she hev ter be ther mither o' this youngster till we kin find its ginwine mother?"

After a few more words Avalanche tramped away up the lonely gulch, while Alf turned back on his errand. He first got Prudence Cordelia from the stable, and then went to the Man-Trap after Nellie, whom he found at her old post, and who was apparently very glad to see him.

They soon were out of the little town of Eureka, for Nellie had consented to go and care for Leone's baby until Leone herself could be found.

On their arrival at Bonanza mine, they found that Avalanche had already got there ahead of them; and to their surprise, found Leone there also, with her babe in her arms.

She told her story to all, as they gathered about the camp-fire.

She had pursued the two ruffians who stole Master Dick until they had puzzled and lost her in the intricacies of the mountain. Then it had taken her many long, weary hours to pick her way back to the mine, where she had at last arrived, only a few hours previous to the arrival of Avalanche with the babe, and Alf and Nellie.

That was a happy night in Bonanza mine—happy to Leone, in particular, because of something that promised her future happiness—the arrival of one, at the darkest hour before day-dawn, who of all men they least expected to see—the Prince of the Road of those bygone days in the Black Hills—Deadwood Dick!

He came stalking unexpectedly into camp, his form erect and face calm; he stopped in the playing firelight, and gazed around him, his eyes resting upon Leone and her babe.

The little woman had grown deathly pale at first, but she threw off the faintness that had attacked her by a mighty effort, and rose to her feet, trembling violently, an appealing look in her eyes. Nellie had taken Master Dick, and the husband and wife stood once more face to face.

"Leone!" Deadwood Dick said, opening his arms, "I have come."

She gave a low, glad cry of joy, and springing into his embrace, burst into tears. But they were tears of ecstatic joy; how shall we ever attempt to describe the happiness and love that then filled those two reunited hearts?

After the first rapturous greetings were



over, due explanations were made all around, Deadwood Dick coming in last on the list.

"And what hev ye bin doin' wi' yerself, since the night I left ye, on our arrival in Eureka?" Avalanche asked of the Prince.

"Well, I will tell you. I fled from the town, after laying out the sheriff, and hid for a couple of days in the mountains which flank one side of this gulch. The first day I spent thus I made a discovery—discovered the man, Red Brand, robed in ghostly robes and parading upon a rocky plateau. The hour was just at dusk, and having heard, previous to our coming to Eureka, of the Phantom Miner, I put this and that together, and came to the conclusion that *Red Brand and the Phantom Miner were one*. Of course I grew interested, and from my hiding-place I watched.

"By and by two burly men dragged the toggery of a large balloon out upon the plateau, and over a natural gas geyser close at hand, inflated the concern, which was of goodly size, and attached to it a car capable of holding four or five persons. When all was in readiness, the two men let go the grapnel, and sprung into the car, and rose slowly upward. Then I saw the secret of the whole business, plain enough.

"A rope was attached to the car upon a windlass, and also to Red Brand, around his body, in under his feet and arms, so that when the full length, of about a thousand feet, had spun from the reel, he was raised upward and borne through the air. In the night his means of flight through the air is a mystery, unless the observer has an eye keen enough to penetrate far toward the heaven, where, in what is known as the semi-counter-current—meaning four currents blowing to a centre—the balloon is drifting. The balloon rises or lowers at will, by use of a lever escape-valve, and ballast; if allowed to rise above the concentrating current, it moves north toward the place of starting; if lowered below the said current, it goes sou'westward toward the prairies. In the daytime the Phantom is not seen abroad, and I think this successfully explains what has been a mystery to the Eurekaite."

"And this Red Brand is the Phantom?"

"Was, until I adopted his role. We accidentally met, one day later, and he told me of my knowledge of his secret, though the Lord only knows how he found it out. He declared his hate for me, and proposed that we fight it out."

"If I won, I was to Phantomize it in his stead. Well, we duelled, and I *won*!"

A piercing scream came from Noisy Nell.

"And was he killed?" she gasped.

"Yes, young lady. I know—he was your father, and I have in trust for you a thousand dollars in gold, which he had secretly mined from the basin."

"And *you*, then, are the ghost that robbed us?" Avalanche said.

"Yes, by the mesmeric power which I possess, I mesmerized you in the tunnel, and later robbed the camp."

Then Dick made further explanations, mentioning that the skeleton shape and rattles were all ingenious contrivances of Red Brand's originality; also all concerning Red-Hot Harris and Deadwood Dick No. 2, which caused a great deal of surprise. This is all known to the reader.

He also explained the secret of his invulnerability by exhibiting a suit of mail worn beneath his garb, which he had found on the body of Red Brand.

A week was spent in Bonanza Basin, quietly, no intrusion from the Eurekaite making it necessary for Dick to fly. Happy was he with his wife and child, and a prime favourite in camp.

During the week old Fordyce Graylford died, and by Bolton's arrangement, Dick and his new-found mother, Cathie, were present. The old man relented in the last hours, and asked the forgiveness of his wronged ones, and made over all his property, at Dick's request, to Cathie. Dick did not wish any of it. Though the story of how Cathie had left him with the Harrises in infancy, and the proofs, seemed all genuine, he could not quite make it seem that she was his mother, and he avowed it his intention to still retain the name of Harris.

At the expiration of the week he made a sale of Deadwood Dick's Bonanza to Little Alf and Keno Bill; then, with his wife and child, and the two aeronauts, one morning he sailed away over the silver land of Idaho, in his balloon, the "*Leone*," for a land of the West, where he hoped to bury himself forever, and the bitter past.

With Deadwood Dick went that "devastatin' eppydemic," Old Avalanche, and his goat. Prudence was left behind, for want of room in the balloon.

They are supremely happy, Dick and Leone, but occasionally there rises before the vision of the ex-outlaw, like a haunting of the future, the malignant face and menacingly gleaming eyes of the bitterest of all his foes, *Edith Stone*!

THE END



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